

2021

# ONet Report to IPBES 8 Stakeholder Day

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Young Ecosystem Services Specialists  
(YESS) Delegation to IPBES 8  
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## Introduction

Differently from other years, the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of IPBES Stakeholder Day has unfolded in unprecedented ways, organized into five main online sessions taking place on different days and time zones, to accommodate IPBES Stakeholders worldwide. The programme was structured as follows:

- Opening Plenary – Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2021
- Regional Sessions - 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> June 2021
- Closing Plenary – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021

## IPBES 2020 Stakeholder Survey Results

Over 2020 a IPBES Stakeholder Survey was launched. The aim of the survey was that of (1) improving and update 2016 survey; (2) generating new insights about obstacles and incentives for SH to engage with IPBES; (3) sharing factual information to increase knowledge about IPBES.

Developed with the support of professional experts (statistician + social scientist) while designing the questions, the survey took approximately 12 minutes to fill in, was made available into the 6 UN languages, and was open from 4 May to 10 June 2020.

Key highlights are the following:

- About 30% of respondents chose another language than English. 129 nationalities (112 in 2016) for 1064 total responses.
- 78% of individuals in research & teaching (57%) and conservation (21%) activities; 22% others
- 2/3 of respondents are actively contributing to IPBES. Among them, 44% have been disseminating IPBES products, tools or findings,
  - 23% have engaged as authors, 25% as external reviewers,
  - 17% are contributing to IPBES national or regional platforms.
  - 17% have already participated in IPBES Stakeholder Days.

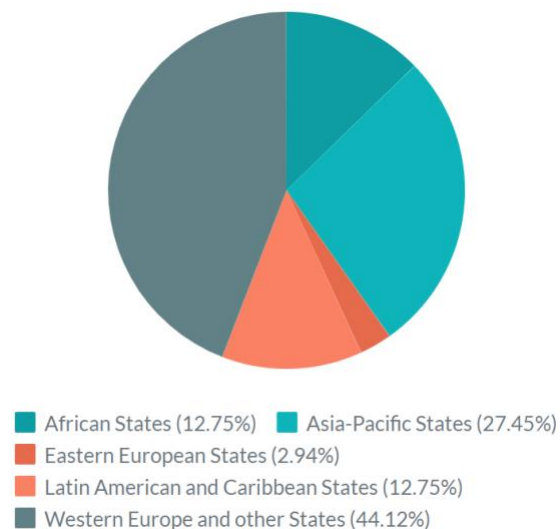
Identified obstacles to engagement included:

- mainly competing work requirements (59% as a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> obstacle);
- unclear how IPBES works (17% as 1<sup>st</sup> obstacle);
- lack of financial support (16% as 1<sup>st</sup> obstacle);
- language barrier (4% as 1<sup>st</sup> obstacle)

## Opening Plenary (Thursday 3rd June 2021)

Stakeholder Day opened on June 3<sup>rd</sup> with the welcome remarks of the moderators Claire Doole and Wanja Niyngi. Their intervention was followed by the introduction of the two networks mainly representing IPBES Stakeholders: the Open-ended Network for IPBES Stakeholders (ONet) and the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IIFBES).

The Opening Plenary has been followed by a wide variety of participants, with a not surprising majority of representatives from Western European (and other) countries, and a fair representation from Asia-Pacific states, African states, and Latin American and Caribbean states (see Figure 1).



*Figure 1. Geographical representation of participants to the Opening Session of the IPBES 8 SH Day.*

ONet was represented by Pranab Patar, member of the facilitation team. His intervention was directed towards acknowledging the role of ONet in giving voice to IPBES Stakeholders, providing room for exchanging opinions and supporting one another while interfacing with IPBES.

Similarly, Joji Carino spoke on behalf of the IIFBES network, highlighting how Indigenous People and Local Communities (IPLC) have been gaining importance within IPBES, although recognizing that there is still much to be done for indigenous and local knowledge (ILK) to be adequately recognized and addressed into IPBES. Next on the agenda was Anne Larigauderie, from the IPBES secretariat. Anne brought a summary of some of the most recent advances in IPBES. She highlighted, for example, the excellent repercussions of the platform's global assessment on biodiversity and ecosystem services, launched in 2020. The report has been widely used in academia and for policy making and was an important supporting material in the decision of the World Economic Forum to list biodiversity loss as one of the top risks to businesses worldwide for the first time ever.

The head of IPBES communications, Rob Spaul, also looked back at the advances made at IPBES regarding forms of communication. Considering traditional media, he pointed out that there has been an expressive increase of online articles mentioning the platform, mainly focused on the global assessment and on the pandemics report. Turning to social media, IPBES is now to launch French and Spanish accounts to increase accessibility among stakeholders, recognizing that English alone did not encompass the diversity of users. Another important advance was the first season of IPBES's podcast, Nature Insights. The podcast is set for a second season after being so well received by the public. The impact tracking database (TRACK) was also highlighted as a success in the field of IPBES communications. The session continued with a presentation of the IPBES work program by Simone Schiele. The IPBES work program is organized into six objectives, four of which correspond directly to the functions of IPBES: assessing knowledge, building capacity, strengthening knowledge foundations, supporting policy, communicating and engaging, and improving

the Platform's effectiveness. Followingly, scopes of the future IPBES assessment on transformative change has been presented by Karen O'Brien (University of Oslo). The last speech of the panel discussion was led by Bob Watson, University of East Anglia and former IPBES Chair. He focused on the thematic assessment of the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food, and health in the context of climate change (the nexus assessment).

Finally, to close the Opening Ceremony, IPBES Chair Ana María Hernández Salgar praised the role of SH Day as a critical platform for stakeholders to discuss and exchange towards the strengthening of IPBES' work globally (Figure 2).



*Figure 2. Participation of IPBES Chair Ana María Hernández Salgar.*

### **Regional Sessions (4th-7th-8th June 2021)**

The three regional sessions covered respectively the following regions:

- North, Central, and South America and the Caribbean (4th June).
- Asia and the Pacific (7<sup>th</sup> June).
- Africa, Europe, and Central Asia (8<sup>th</sup> June).

### ***Stakeholders' Representation at the Regional Sessions***

Each session opened with a poll survey directed to all participants, asking, "in which capacity do you engage with IPBES?". Results are presented below (Figure 3).

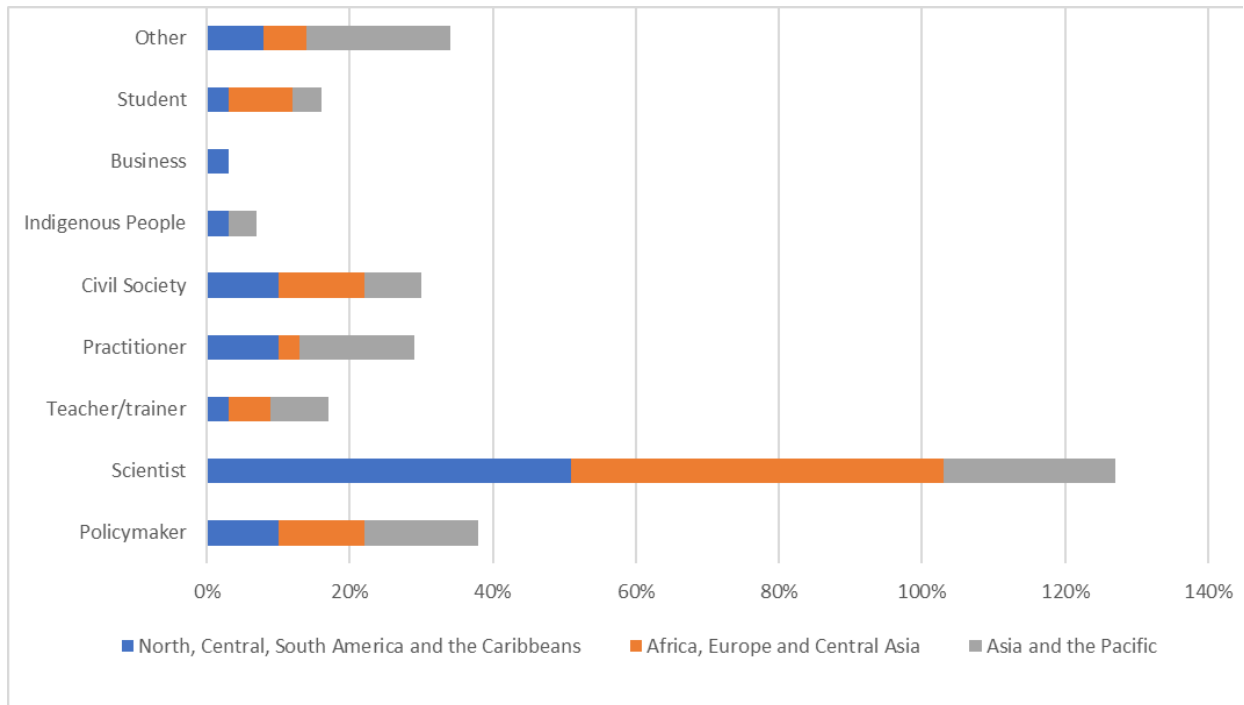


Figure 3. Participants' responses to the poll: "in what capacity do you engage with IPBES?". Responses are expressed in percentage for each regional session.

The poll results for North, Central, and South America and the Caribbean were quite similar. More than half of the respondents identified as scientists (51%), while policymakers, practitioners, and civil society were a distant second place (10% of respondents each). Teacher/trainer, indigenous people, business, and student were also all tied at 3% of responses each. It is interesting to note that, unlike Africa, Europe, and Central Asia, indigenous people and the business sector were present, but unfortunately with very few participants. The "other" category was reported slightly more, reaching 8% of responses.

The poll of the Africa, Europe, and Central Asia regions had a total of 33 respondents. Results showed more than half of stakeholders engaging with IPBES were from the academic sphere (52%). There was equal representation of civil society and policymakers (12%), followed by students (9%), teachers/trainees (6%), and practitioners (3%). Remarkably, businesses and indigenous people were not represented (0%), and there were people who did not identify with any of the groups (6%).

Finally, the results for the Asia and the Pacific region were the most different from the three polls. Though still the most common answer, only 24% of respondents identified they engaged with IPBES under the scientist's capacity, roughly half as much for the other regions. Policymakers and practitioners were tied at 16%, followed by teacher/trainer and civil society at 8% each, and indigenous people and students at 4% each. Similar to Africa, Europe, and Central Asia, no one from the business sector responded to the poll. Curiously, 20% of respondents indicated they were from another category of stakeholder. Judging by the popularity of this category ("other"), it would be interesting to hear from these respondents how they would classify themselves to understand if there is an additional stakeholder category currently being overlooked.

## *Opening Remarks by IPBES Chair*

Each session opened with a welcome remark from the IPBES Chair Hernández Salgar. Special considerations on the aim of Stakeholder Day were made, highlighting how fostering dialogue between stakeholder networks and IPBES is critical, especially in view to the 2020-2030 decade for restoration. To this goal, the Chair highlighted the importance of holding yearly meetings, presented as the key to improve synergies within the science-policy spheres. The Chair further commented on the importance of representativity and diversity of world regions as well as of attendees, stressing how SH Day represents an active means of detecting gaps.

## *Insights from the IPBES 2018 Regional Assessments*

All regional sessions followed with insights from the IPBES 2018 Regional Assessments.

Professor Cristiana Seixas from the University of Campinas and Brazilian Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services presented an overview on the knowledge gaps observed with the regional assessment report for the Americas and the Caribbean. Results stress how information about indigenous peoples is scarce and even non existing in some locations, greatly limiting how ILK can be applied. Professor Seixas also highlighted important differences within the region, indicating that South America is particularly data-deficient when compared to its northern counterpart. Biodiversity use in this region is above the global average, and work on this front would benefit from further capacity building, particularly of taxonomists. To illustrate this point, Professor Seixas mentioned estimates that over 50% of marine species in South America are unknown to science. Furthermore, she indicated that while there are many policy instruments, there is still reluctance and lack of will to apply many.

Insights from IPBES 2018 regional assessment for Asia and the Pacific have been introduced by Sonali Senaratna Sellamuttu. The Asia-Pacific Region is a region undergoing rapid economic growth and change, with high poverty levels in some sub-regions resulting in high demand for provisioning ecosystem services. Major ecosystems result threatened, and habitats fragmented and degraded. Among underlying causes of change are both (direct drivers such as land-use change, climate change, invasive alien species, pollution, and unsustainable use) and indirect drivers. The interactions among them both are exacerbating the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services. Policies would benefit from involving local communities in conservation, integrating biodiversity conservation into key development sectors, and enhancing private sector partnerships to leverage finance on biodiversity conservation, among other solutions. Relevant knowledge gaps have also been identified, including a better application of science and technology to improve food, water, and energy security while reducing pressure on ecosystems.

Emma Archer presented the regional assessment of Africa. Highlighted Africa's value for the biodiversity of large mammals, indigenous people and how it is under accounted in policymaking. Reported for all regions of Africa, there are species in danger, several with extinct. Continued on the AU Agenda 2063, SDGs and Aichi targets are unlikely, with two achievable and three unlikely. Reported options for Africa are the expansion of protected areas, control of invasive species and restoration, and how some actions with good policies have shown positive results. On the gaps in knowledge, highlighted that on species in red list categories there is data deficiency in all regions of Africa and how knowledge gaps and missing evidence are affecting implementation and report on progress leading to gaps in the implementation of

policies. There is a concern of unplanned urban growth affecting hugely biodiversity loss. Highlighted youth is increasingly interested in studying biodiversity preservation.

The report on Europe and Central Asia was introduced by Markus Fischer. The assessment was developed by an ECA team with regional coverage of Europe and Central Asia, including Russia up to down to the Pacific Coast. The report presents nature as essential for human wellbeing, and that biodiversity loss is economically expensive. Terrestrial habitat declining since 1950. The assessment on ecosystem loss revealed wetlands have declined by 50%, and only 9% of EU marine habitat are in “favourable conservation status”. Further, biodiversity loss by 42% terrestrial animal and plant species, 71% freshwater fish, 60% marine fish were declining. The causes identified are land-use change and pollution, loss of indigenous and local knowledge, consumption, and business not leading/not willing to lead change. Options identified are mainstream biodiversity, integration across sectors, and participation. Knowledge gaps included geographical variation gaps, nature contribution to people, the contribution of indigenous ways. Further, direct drivers of biodiversity loss are well understood, but indirect and interaction between direct and indirect are largely unknown, as well as how to best mainstream biodiversity across sectors. Among the implementation gaps, the assessment identified a lack of goal-oriented, pro-active measures, a lack of integrated approach (contradiction across sectors), lack of policy instruments and participation of stakeholders, lack of adequate funding and existing harmful subsidies, economic growth, and protection of nature interests clash, protected areas are underfunded, small and poorly managed and education, consumption, and shared responsibility are lacking.

### *Engaging with IPBES functions*

Following a brief message on IPBES functions, each session saw the intervention of a group of early-career researchers, part of the Young Ecosystem Services Specialists Network. Each representing their respective region, Carla Washbourne, Andrew Kadykalo, and Hyeonju Ryu held a presentation on motivation, barriers, and opportunities of early-career researchers (ECR) to get involved into IPBES work (Figure 4). Presented data is the result of a research project conducted by the speakers along with other YESS colleagues. The study reveals that 90% of the interviewed ECR want to participate in the science-policy interface, motivated by the perspective of contributing to societal change, along with opportunities to strengthen their capacities and expand their network to policymakers. The survey also pointed out that ECRs struggle to be acknowledged by senior authors. This, in addition to the lack of funding, opportunities, and training, represents a barrier to ECRs’ credibility and involvement into science-policy interaction.

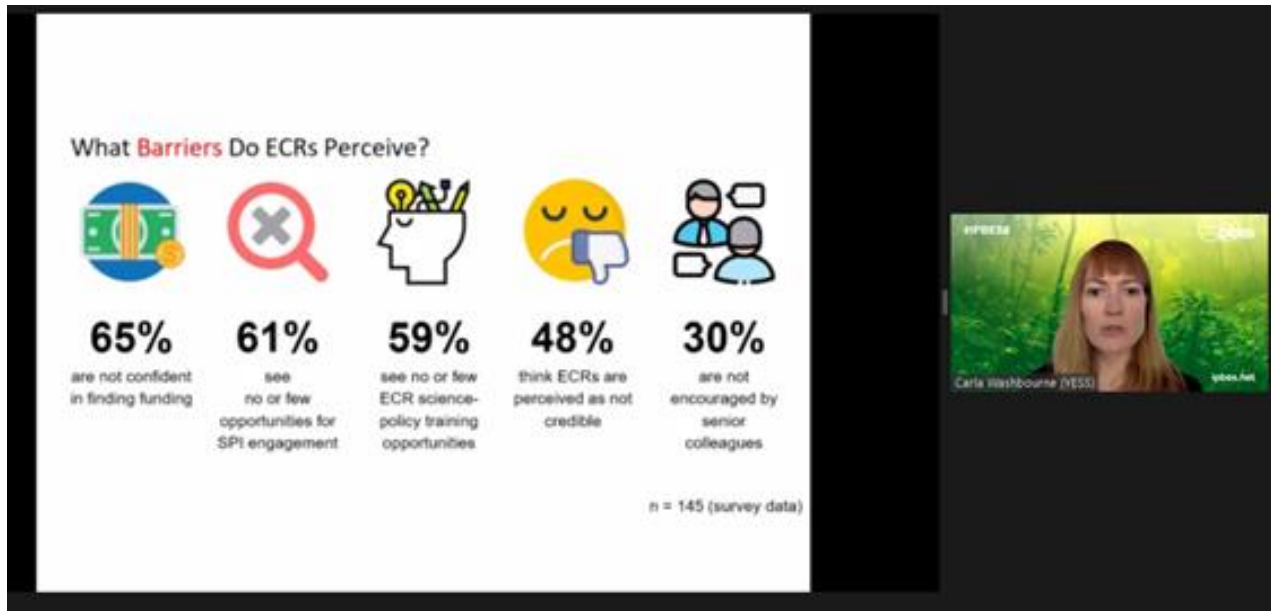


Figure 4. YESS Representative Carla Washbourne presents barriers perceived by early-career researchers, with engaging with science-policy interaction

## Regional and National Platforms and Networks

### North, Central and South Americas and the Caribbean Region

This session saw several speakers introducing to existing regional and national platforms and networks facilitating stakeholders' integration into the IPBES work, including opportunities for capacity building and engaging of Indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs).

Natalie Boodram of the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) presented her and her colleagues' work with the Grenada national ecosystem services assessment. An excellent example of this assessment was their "citizen guide" to the assessment. Concerned about the accessibility of the report, a significant effort was undertaken in Grenada to produce texts, videos, and other formats of communication that accompanied the national assessment. These serve as tools for capacity building and avoid that the traditional paper format is not forgotten on a shelf, as stated by Natalie.

Ricardo Rozzi then followed. He is the focal point of IPBES in Chile and works for the country's ministry for the environment. During his intervention, Ricardo highlighted a unique opportunity: with the new Chilean national constitution under development, and the country has the chance to highlight critical constructive plural valuations of nature and envision desirable futures with this in mind. Ricardo was also most enthusiastic about the idea of a subregional IPBES platform, suggested by one of the participants through the Q&A. Marcella Ohira wrapped the session by presenting several initiatives by the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI). The STeP (Science, Technology, and Policy) fellowship program was aimed at early-career researchers and launched in 2020 in two pilot versions (Argentina and Mexico). It was also during Marcella's intervention that we heard the first mention of "science diplomacy".



Finally, Viviana Figueroa, from IIFB, Indigenous Women's Biodiversity Network (IWBN), and Member of the ILK Task Force, gave a talk on "IPBES messages to empowering indigenous people at the international and national level". In addition, Yesenia Hernández spoke about a case study of the application of these IPBES messages to indigenous people considering a local and micro-regional scale, in the state of Oaxaca, Mexico.

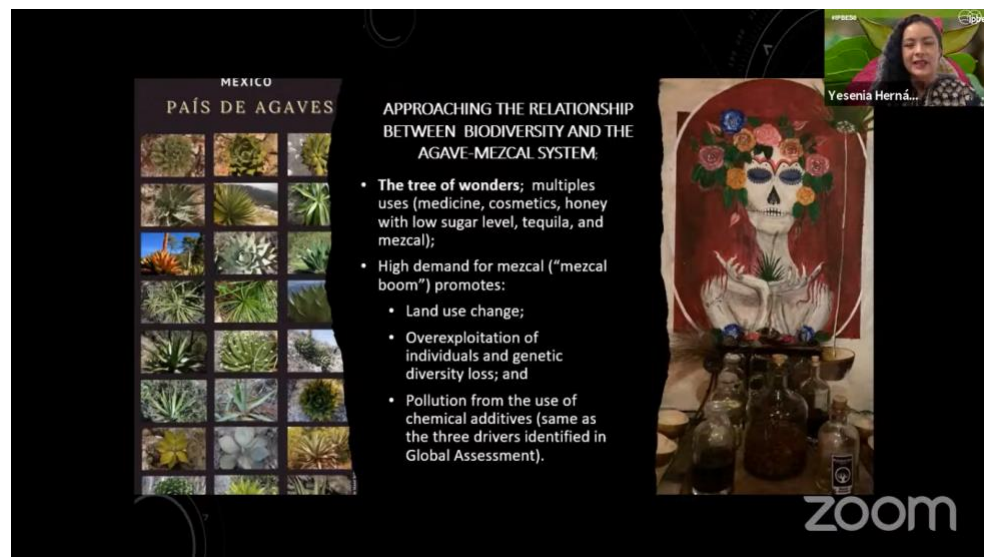


Figure 5. Participation of Yesenia Hernández, ILK Focal Point, Mexico.

## Asia and the Pacific

As in the Americas session, in the Asia and Pacific session, various stakeholders had the opportunity to share their experiences related to IPBES.

Yasuo Takahashi, Institute for Global Environment Strategies (IGES), spoke about the challenges of participation with various actors, including companies and the general public in the case of Japan. Also, Clarissa Arida, ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), talked about regional and national platforms and networks with a particular focus on capacity building (Figure 6).

Later, Florence Daguitan, from IIFBES, emphasized the outcomes of the work of IPLCs on IAS, considering the relevant assessment focusing mainly on the case of the Philippines. She also spoke about his experiences with invasive species considering the indigenous vision. Lastly, Prasert Trakansuphakon from Pgakenyaw Association for Sustainable Development, presented research entitled "Dialogue across Indigenous, local and scientific knowledge systems reflecting on the IPBES on Pollinators, Pollination, and food production" focusing on the case of Thailand.



Figure 6. Participation of Clarissa Arida, ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB).

## Europe, Central Asia and Africa

As in the previous sessions, stakeholders from different networks and national groups also had the opportunity to share their experiences.

Cecilia Lindblad, from Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, and IPBES national focal point, shared experiences of IPBES-related networks operating in Sweden. Through her presentation "Regional & national platforms-networks- capacity building in Sweden".

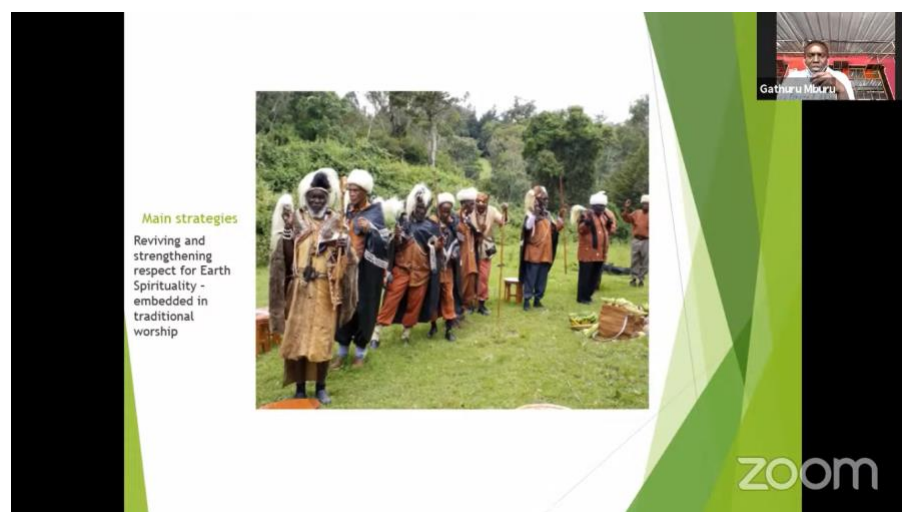
Sié Sylvestre Da, West African Science Service Center on Climate Change and Adapted Land Use (WASCAL), and West African Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services (WABES) presented 15 ECOWAS countries in the WABES project funded by Germany with six partner institutions supporting the implementation of IPBES work in west Africa to enhance capacity building in the science-policy interface. Actions include the establishment of an MSc program on SPI and a series of workshops (8 so far, 300 participants from 21 countries). The challenges identified were that COVID impacted yearly presential workshop, which had to be conducted online to fill the gap. Further, the inclusion in policy-making of the IPBES assessments still could be improved, WABES helping through the MSc program. Additionally, not all countries are a member of IPBES, WABES encouraging. There is a language barrier, WABES activities are bilingual. Also, there is lots of info produced by IPBES, WABES digests and informs in a more approachable way. On communication channels, the language barrier is huge in this region and needs a translation to French. WABES explains IPBES process in regional meetings in French.

Lucy Mullenkei from IIFBES reported on the creation of the network of indigenous people and local communities with a focus on biodiversity. Simon Mitambo – Kenya Teacher on cosmology, working with the African biodiversity network, bachelor on sociology presented the African Biodiversity Network aim of working on interventions on governance. Focus on indigenous people governing ecosystems, exploring

ways to revive biodiversity and prevent genetic biodiversity loss, working with communities managing the environment, assessing biodiversity. African Biodiversity Network approach is to reflect on the past to understand current biodiversity loss and value indigenous ways because they have barely changed and can inform the present. Further, the network is working with the EU to implement multi-approach of different knowledge systems (indigenous/science/local/language) and also to recognize the value of regional diversity of communities, which provides valuable data by indigenous people who see changes happening. There is further work done with communities that face difficulties and find solutions in their past knowledge by reviving past traditions, and it was highlighted how this process should be recognised.

Finally, Gathuru Mburu, a member of Ngaatho Community Foundation (NCF), presented his experience in a presentation entitled "Mobilizing ILK for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond" (Figure 7).

All regional sessions concluded with general considerations on the need for indigenous communities to be more involved in IPBES assessment while also recognizing the great work done so far in this direction.



*Figure 7. Participation of Gathuru Mburu, Ngaatho Community Foundation (NCF).*

## **Closing Plenary (9th June 2021)**

The closing plenary of the IPBES Stakeholder Days opened with remarks by IPBES Chair Ana María Hernández Salgar and Claire Doole, Eva Sphen, Sonja Gueorguiev from the IPBES Secretariat moderated the sessions.

A brief overview of the Regional and National Platforms and Networks meetings carried out throughout the week was shared by Sarah Banda-Genchev (UNCCD). She mentioned that the regional meetings involved discussions among the different stakeholders on the opportunities and challenges in the science-policy interface, funding system and the need for strengthening the national platforms. Furthermore, she

highly acknowledged the effort put forth by the IPLC on finding sustainable solutions by integrating their knowledge into science.

Florence Daguitan (IIFBES) underlined the work of IIFBES. Through the efforts of IIFBES, the scientific community recognized the indigenous knowledge possessed by the IPLCs. Working together produced some incredible evidence-based results with which the IPLCs could potentially take control of their land rights. Moreover, this approach provided a better understanding of the past, present and future actions regarding biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration and enhancement. Additionally, she emphasized the lack of implementation of policies and agreements favoring and empowering the IPLCs and the discrimination faced by the IPLCs.

Paola Fontanella Pisa (UNU-EHS) concluded with feedback on behalf of ONet and YESS members, highlighting the role stakeholders played in implementing the assessments once again. She noted how the online modalities allowed a wider diversity of stakeholders to participate regarding the SH Day. She further remarked that the category of early-career researchers and professionals was comparatively higher than the other participants in the SH Day.

## **Session 1**

The first session focussed on understanding the involvement of IPLC with the IPBES.

Joji stated that since IPBES has embedded diverse knowledge systems in their conceptual framework and principles to encourage the participation of IPLC in its functions, their evidence-based assessments have been beneficial for IPLCs. Besides, as IPBES has a significant impact on the policy deliberation of the CBD, especially its global assessments on biodiversity and ecosystem services, acknowledging the contributions of IPLCs in conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity through their assessments has helped IPLC in the negotiations. In the future, IPBES would like to engage with more networks and provide funding support for indigenous people worldwide irrespective of whether they belong to developed or developing countries. Stressing on the need to encourage the bridging mechanisms of different knowledge platforms and strengthening capacity building of early career researchers, she concluded her remarks. Viviana: Appreciating the free and informed consent of the indigenous people in the regional sessions, Sherry emphasized bridging the natural and social sciences. Given that human interaction and biodiversity are inseparable, she noted the need for an Interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary task force to work together. She stressed that SDGs needed reinforcement as only a few SDGs involved indigenous people. In addition, showcasing indigenous ceremonies during sessions, such as an indigenous song, should be encouraged to appreciate and create awareness of the different transfer mechanisms among the IPLCs. Adding to the previous speaker, she also stressed incorporating more languages for better outreach.

Talking on behalf of the IPBES TSU, Peter Bates summarized how IPBES has been working rigorously to involve the IPLC in their work. From the call for contributions that brought knowledge and information from communities to currently developing data management policy of press, widening the communication by involving languages such as Spanish and French in dialogues, IPBES has been working towards expanding and including the IPLC in all its functions. Apart from this, IPBES hoped to involve more

authors from IPLC in assessments through IPBES fellowships and potentially stimulate community-based research, support funding systems, and facilitate dialogue between policymakers, scientists, and IPLC.

## **Session 2:**

The next session of the closing plenary focused on examples from supply chain actors on the importance of IPBES findings in business.

Jenne mentioned that incorporating IPBES scientific findings would help them be more transparent and credible to their customers. As H&M aims to reduce the negative impacts on biodiversity and contribute to a sustainable future for the fashion industry, the science-based ways from IPBES findings would enable them to do so. In addition, understanding the importance of mapping from source to supply and usage of high-quality standards and certified materials would be vital in developing a common framework for all fashion brands to ensure the sustainable source of raw materials. In the case of H&M, the brand uses standardized certified materials and regularly conducts onsite and desktop audits to stay true to its sustainability commitments. She recommended prioritizing a close collaboration between fashion brands and IPBES to assert the sustainability of all the materials.

With great affirmation that science is imperative when making decisions in supply chains, Helen mentioned how the IPBES report 2019 had created increased awareness about the importance of sustainability globally. Companies were able to understand the interdependency of their products with nature. Moreover, the task force on nature-related financial disclosure that would launch soon could further benefit the companies to recognize this interdependency and reflect on their actions. She highlighted raw materials used in the fashion industry contributed to 70% of the footprint. Prioritizing them and launching regenerative funds for nature to reduce the footprint could be a way forward. In addition, she stated that there was a need to find the right practice-based and outcome-based certification, build a collaborative approach across all supply chains, and support the producers to transition to better practices. IPBES assessments would help the companies to understand the complexity of biodiversity and take responsible actions.

Pauline expressed how IPBES findings have helped in developing better investment options. She pointed out that besides certifications, another vital way of sustainably managing resources would be to consider all actors in the supply chain as partners and build a shared understanding of the various risks that persist in biodiversity and business. She explained that if companies realized the loss in business interrelates with the loss in biodiversity, it would instinctively raise their interest in biodiversity. Furthermore, IPBES assessments involve the voice of indigenous people and all supply chain actors. As a result, companies would better understand how to assess their impacts on biodiversity while maintaining a successful business.

## **Session 3:**

The last session dealt with understanding the role of coalitions to engage businesses and help them in decision-making that would potentially reduce biodiversity loss.

Florence highlighted the recent IUCN publication based on mapping 208 global coalitions of state and non-state actors involving the public, civil society and corporate actors. These actors have been working collectively to overcome issues related to natural resources and land use, focusing on the impacts on biodiversity. Summarizing the key findings in the publication, she mentioned that out of all the actors involved, the actors from the public and the civil society were responsible for committing to most of the projects concerning biodiversity. Additionally, most coalitions emphasized more on climate, water, and waste management rather than biodiversity issues. Inclusiveness of partners from all sectors and bottom-up approach remained comparatively low. Adoption of common standards and best practices globally in terms of impact assessment was imperative. Apart from these, more engagement between the corporate partners and conservation experts needed to be encouraged.

Sengupta (Centre for Sustainable Business, CSB) mentioned how the Global Assessment Report of IPBES in 2019 highlighted the impact of palm oil expansion on ecosystem loss in Southeast Asia. Therefore, there was a dire need to focus on this area. Furthermore, as India imports almost 95% of the oil from the southeast region, the south-south sustainable commodity value chain was underway. However, conventional methods of promoting a sustainable supply chain may not be feasible for all; consequently, CSB promotes shared responsibility of all the stakeholders involved. He further suggested that utilizing system lenses to identify important actors and involving them in dialogues, promoting and building structured governance of multi-stakeholder coalition with committed organizations taking the lead as a secretariat would be a way forward.

Business for nature coalition aims to bring together the companies and conservation sector and provide the policymakers to make agreements on nature confidently. With more than 65 partner organizations from these sectors involved in this coalition, Eva expressed that IPBES assessments were essential to business. It provided a sense of urgency, credibility, and scientific authority for business. Furthermore, she recommended that IPBES should focus more on simplifying and prioritizing the status of drivers of nature loss for different regions while working with science-based targets and advocating policy ambition.

Mark explained how Capital Coalitions worked by uniting the economic, social, and environmental capital interface between business and science. He mentioned that rather than simplifying biodiversity, making it more accessible for people to understand its complexity would be beneficial. The science-based evidence from IPBES could help businesses to integrate biodiversity while making decisions about their actions. Identifying important biodiversity metrics could facilitate the rapid green transition. Apart from these, connecting different actors, working together, and understanding every part of the system proved to be extremely helpful in successfully running their projects.

### **Wrap up and closing**

The session was closed by Sonja Gueorguiev, IPBES Secretariat. Her final remarks included an acknowledgment of the role that IPBES can play in support to businesses, facilitating their understanding of the impact they can have on environment and biodiversity. Following up on this acknowledgment, she confirmed IPBES' willingness to assist companies and collaborate with them so to join synergies. Following the last take away lessons from Stakeholder Days, shared by co-Moderator Spehn, the session closed and participants were invited to further complete Stakeholders' Opening Statements for both ONet and IIFBES members (Figure 10).

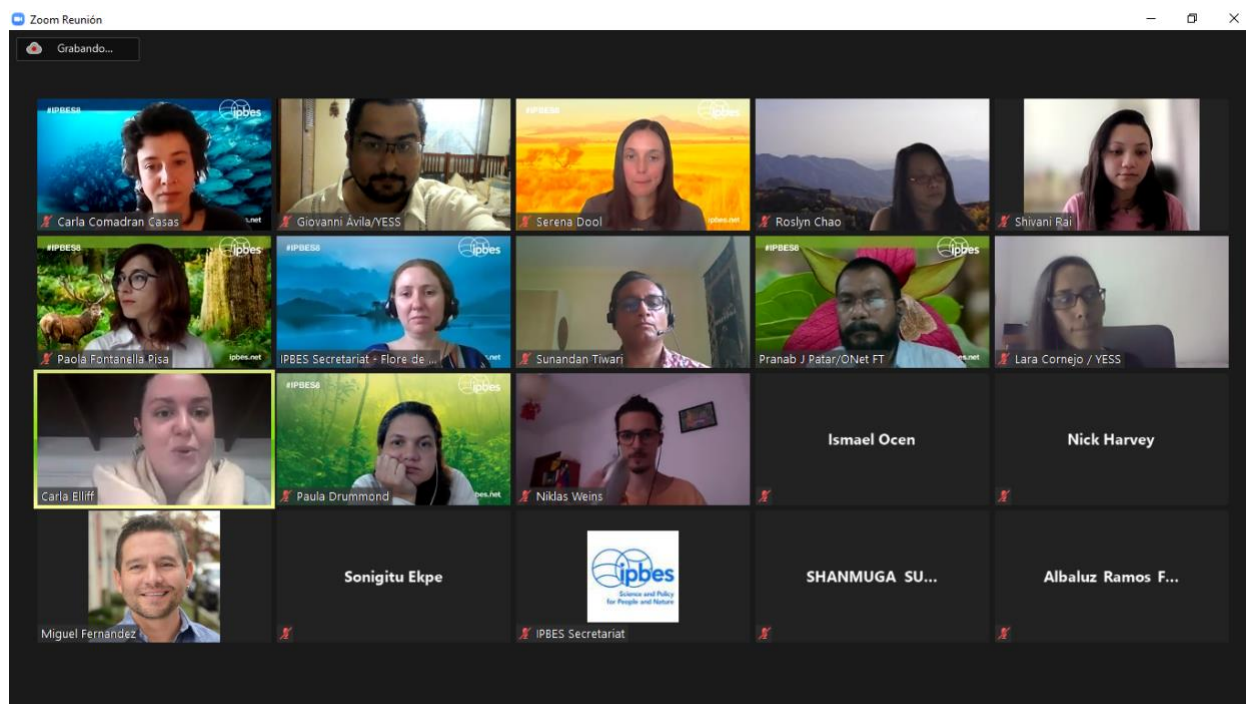


Figure 10. SH Day Closing Plenary

## Finalizing Opening Statement (9th June 2021)

It has been common practice that the IPBES Stakeholders present a brief statement during the opening session of the IPBES Plenary meetings. The ONet Facilitating Team has taken over the responsibility of coordinating efforts for the drafting of the Opening Statement from ONet Stakeholders, which has been presented on the occasion of the Opening Ceremony of the 8<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPBES Plenary. The Opening Statement, which has been presented by the ONet Facilitating Team member Miguel Fernandez, is the result of a workshop series involving all ONet members on a voluntary base. The workshop series, which started with ONet Caucus Day, has taken place every day after each session of the IPBES SH Day.

The process that led to the finalization of the Opening Statement has seen six key steps, carried out for it to guarantee inclusivity and collaboration from all stakeholders:

- An e-mail containing a first online form has been sent to all ONet members. This online form had the objective of inviting the IPBES Stakeholder community to suggest ideas that could be part of the Opening Statement. This initial email was followed by several email reminders as well as announcements made through social media platforms that reinforced our initial invitation.
- The next moment in the process to define an Opening Statement was on May 31st during the ONet Caucus Day meeting where the ONet community was invited to provide with more ideas. Important but very difficult to capture through a survey is the discussion component. During ONet Caucus Day, all participants had the opportunity to discuss and present their ideas.
- The Facilitation Team has then worked to synthesize and consolidate received ideas.
- Participants to the SH Days Regional Sessions have then been involved into the process through an online global consultation. Following each of the IPBES8 Stakeholder Days regional time-zone

sessions, special sessions have been organized, dedicated to designing both the ONet Opening Statement and the one from the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IIFBES). These three regional meetings have not only promoted the participation of the global community as they will be held in 3 different time zones but will also help us to prioritize the suggested topics.

- The last step of the process took place on the last day of SH Days, when the text has been finalized within a 90 minutes' meeting with all interested stakeholders.
- Finally, the Opening Statement has been presented during the Opening Plenary of the 8<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPBES Plenary.

Stakeholders have been invited to contribute by suggesting topics and voting their preferences both through social media and through open-ended online meetings. This integrated approach on developing the opening statement represented an opportunity (as well as a responsibility) to speak to governments and decision makers about the urgency of addressing the biodiversity and ecosystem services crisis, to prioritize and build common solutions to our most pressing problems.

By drawing on the experiences, needs and priorities of the IPBES stakeholder community and bringing them to the attention of the IPBES Secretariat, members and observers, the opening statement served to:

1. Confirm stakeholder commitment to support IPBES processes and outcomes
2. Include stakeholders in the decision-making process at IPBES plenary sessions
3. Bring to the attention of IPBES state members issues crucial to the stakeholder community

To see the final version of the opening statement, [please see here](#)

## **Final Comments on behalf of YESS Network**

Although the experiences of each delegate were different, Dr. Carla Elliff (see additional resources) correctly points out certain remarks which can be shared by most of the YESS participants:

- *I had no idea what “stakeholder days” meant before joining the delegation, but there was a lot of material available to read or watch — by the way, I thoroughly recommend IPBES’s YouTube channel! In fact, all Stakeholder Day events, which were divided into an opening plenary, regional sessions, and a closing plenary, were recorded and are available there.*
- *During this sort of pre-event, we heard from numerous stakeholders involved in IPBES processes, be that in the condition of report author or person applying the knowledge for policy making, for example. To me, hearing from the people that have helped make and use IPBES products helped set the scene for understanding where these reports come from initially.*
- *Apart from having to adjust to a different time zone, the online format overall worked very well for me. However, the pros and cons of going entirely virtual were certainly being listed and weighed carefully by the organizers. Several government delegations had connection failures to some degree throughout the event, and for the stakeholders’ opening statement, our originally chosen representative couldn’t connect. Fortunately, we had a backup plan — a vital thing to do in any event, be that in-person or virtual.*
- *Fitting the IPBES8 schedule into our other commitments was also a challenge. Of course, none of the members of the YESS delegation were obligated to be present at any moment of the event. We*



were all volunteering our time and learning, and there was no pressure. This really helped create a friendly atmosphere among the delegation.

- One of the highlights for me were the daily break meetings with ONet members. These were quick get-togethers where we could discuss what most caught our attention during the previous session of the plenary and connect with other participants in an informal setting. Flore Lafaye de Micheaux from IUCN was a fantastic moderator for these moments and took note of all these discussions so we could write a closing statement for the plenary.
- Being part of this delegation was a very rich experience, but to summarize it in only a few words I'd say it gave me a fresh perspective. It helped me realize how a global community can get together at the interface between science and policy. I also met new people, talked about new subjects, and just basically had a great time expanding my horizons!

#### Additional Resources

##### Links to access SH Day

- Thursday, 3 June 2021 Opening Plenary: <https://youtu.be/MOj7xU6nAwI>
- Friday, 4 June 2021 North, Central and South Americas and the Caribbean Region: <https://youtu.be/U-enP-hb2R0>
- Monday, 7 June 2021 Asia and the Pacific: <https://youtu.be/NcUC91eOgVs>
- Tuesday, 8 June 2021 Europe, Central Asia and Africa: <https://youtu.be/WALPaGjV48w>
- Wednesday, 9 June 2021 Closing Plenary: <https://youtu.be/ETnwY-jAwTU>

##### Carla Elliff's Opinion.

- <https://medium.com/naturewords/what-did-i-get-from-participating-in-yesss-delegation-to-ipbes8-2df04f4157a8>

##### IISD Reporting

- e-poster session: <http://sdg.iisd.org/news/stakeholder-days-e-posters-showcase-initiatives-to-support-ipbes-work/>
- final report: <https://enb.iisd.org/biodiversity/IPBES8/stakeholder-days-summary>
- regional session on North, Central, and South Americas and the Caribbean region : <https://enb.iisd.org/biodiversity/IPBES8/highlights-and-images/4June2021>
- regional session on Asia and the Pacific: <https://enb.iisd.org/biodiversity/IPBES8/highlights-and-images/7June2021>
- regional session on Africa, Europe and Central Asia: <https://enb.iisd.org/biodiversity/IPBES8/highlights-and-images/8June2021>


## Annex I Reactions on Twitter about the participation of YESS.

YESS lo retwitteó

**ipbes** @IPBES · 7 jun.  
Happening 3-9 June: #IPBESstakeholder Days

The 2 regional sessions for North, Central & South Americas & the Caribbean, & for Asia and the Pacific are finished, with Europe, Central Asia & Africa regional session coming up tmrw

Learn more w/ @IISD\_ENB  
[enb.iisd.org/biodiversity/...](http://enb.iisd.org/biodiversity/)



Lelani Mannetti (PhD) y 9 más

12 23

**Tweet**

**BPBES** @BPBES\_oficial

Meanwhile during the short break of the plenary #Stakeholders that are following #IPBES8 met to start crafting the @ONet closing statement.

@CBDNews @IPBES @ONet\_IPBES @IIFB\_indigenous #YESS  
@HesiquioBenitez @Anamariamojita @MarieStenseke @hienggo

Traducir Tweet



**ONet\_IPBES** @ONet\_IPBES · 9 jun.

Both Carla & Håkon would like to see more representation from the African continent & Central Asia in their networks.

Join YESS (Young Ecosystem Services Specialists):  
[es-partnership.org/services/netwo...](http://es-partnership.org/services/netwo...)

Join SSH (Social Sciences and Humanities Network)  
[onet.ipbes.net/node/43](http://onet.ipbes.net/node/43)

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## Annex II Twitter accounts who reacted to YESS participation in Stakeholders Days.

- 
-  **Ana Maria Hernandez Salgar** Siguiendo  
@Anamariamojita  
IPBES Chair/Presidenta de IPBES
- 
-  **Rob Spaul** Siguiendo  
@rspaul  
Leading communications for the Intergovernmental Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services @IPBES Re-tweets are not necessarily endorsements.
-  **ipbes** Siguiendo  
@IPBES  
Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) RT & MT ≠ endorsements. Denialism, trolling or profanity will probably get you banned.
- 
-  **ONet\_IPBES** Siguiendo  
@ONet\_IPBES  
Open-ended Network of IPBES Stakeholders (ONet), self-organised & inclusive, by stakeholders for stakeholders
- 
-  **Ecosystem Services Partnership** Siguiendo  
@ESPartnership  
ESP aims to enhance communication, coordination and cooperation, and to build a strong network of individuals and organizations working on [#ecosystemsolutions](#). 🌱
- 
-  **Yesenia Hernández** Siguiendo  
@Yesyeco  
[#DesarrolloSostenible](#), @earthcharter Oaxaca. Club UNESCO  
[@Preservamb](#) / Incidencia nacional e internacional [#Biodiversidad](#)  
[#WorldHeritage](#) @Women4Biodiv
- 
-  **YESS** Siguiendo  
@YESS\_Network Te sigue
- 
-  **Dr Pranab J Patar** Siguiendo  
@PJP\_2013  
environment & sustainability maverick Awardee- Change Makers of Assam 2020, ICIMOD ICT for Mountain Development Award'15; Finalist - Northeast Young Heroes 2020

**Annex III Final thanks to ONet and IPBES on the last day of the IPBES-8 Plenary.**

