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**Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy  
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**Report of the informal consultation on the Intergovernmental  
Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services  
and capacity-building**

**Note by the secretariat**

The annex to the present note sets out the final report of the informal consultation on the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and capacity-building, convened in Kuala Lumpur, from 4 to 6 November 2013, by the Chair of the Platform. The aim of the meeting was to provide a forum for extensive discussions on key issues related to capacity-building needs and opportunities and mechanisms for addressing those needs. The annex is presented as received from the meeting organizers and has not been formally edited.

## Annex



Office of the Science Advisor  
Prime Minister's Office



# Informal Consultation on IPBES and Capacity Building

*Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 4-6 November 2013*

## Report



# Contents

Executive summary .....	4
1. Introduction.....	7
2. Capacity building needs and mechanisms.....	7
3. Feedback relating to prioritization and monitoring of capacity needs .....	8
4. Feedback relating to mobilizing resources for addressing capacity needs .....	10
5. Feedback relating to networks and networking supporting capacity building activities .....	12
6. Feedback relating to the proposed task force on capacity building.....	16
Annex 1: Agenda .....	18
Annex 2: Participants list.....	21
Annex 3: Capacity Building Needs.....	25
Annex 4: Capacity Building Mechanisms.....	28
Annex 5: Draft Terms of Reference for the Task Force on Knowledge and Data.....	33
Annex 6: Draft Terms of Reference for the Task Force on Capacity Building .....	35

## Executive summary

Capacity building is one of the four functions of IPBES, and it is identified in the IPBES operating principles as needing to be integrated into all relevant aspects of the Platform's work.<sup>1</sup> Consequently capacity building has been a topic of discussion in successive IPBES meetings,<sup>2</sup> and the subject of an earlier international expert meeting organized by the Governments of Brazil and Norway.<sup>3</sup> Despite this, decisions are yet to be taken on how exactly IPBES will enable full and effective participation of all IPBES Members in the Platform's activities, nor how it will work to strengthen the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services across scales, sectors and knowledge systems.

In December 2013, the IPBES Plenary will discuss *inter alia* the future work programme and budget of the Platform. To facilitate discussion on capacity building during this meeting, the IPBES Chair, Professor Zakri Abdul Hamid, convened an 'Informal Consultation on IPBES and Capacity Building' in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 4-6 November 2013. This meeting, with 85 participants from more than 50 countries, provided a forum for extensive discussion on key issues relating to capacity building needs and opportunities/mechanisms for addressing those needs. The agenda for the meeting can be found in Annex 1, and the participants list in Annex 2.

The majority of the meeting in Kuala Lumpur was based on discussion amongst participants, and it is hoped that the results of these discussions will help inform negotiations at IPBES-2 with respect to capacity building, as well as helping to inform subsequent implementation of the work programme with respect to capacity building.

### *Identifying and prioritizing capacity building needs*

Capacity building needs and mechanisms: Participants reviewed the lists of capacity building needs and mechanisms already identified through submissions to IPBES by Governments and other stakeholders.<sup>4</sup> They considered whether the existing synthesis of needs and opportunities needed revising, recognising that although the information had been available for IPBES-1 it had not been discussed. Annex 3 provides a revised annotated list of capacity building needs based on discussions in Kuala Lumpur, and Annex 4 provides a revised annotated list of capacity building mechanisms. In addition, particular stress was laid on the need for sustainability, and for building on existing work and experience.

Prioritizing capacity building needs: Identification of capacity building needs, through whatever process, tends to result in long lists, and the needs identified in Annex 3 would require a significant programme for addressing them. It is already recognised in the functions of IPBES that the Platform will need to prioritize capacity building needs to be addressed, and in addition it will also be important to recognise which of those needs IPBES can address directly, and which would be addressed through mechanisms such as the forum with funders or the proposed matchmaking facility. Participants discussed criteria that might be used in prioritizing capacity building needs, and the results of this discussion are summarised in Section 3.1 of the report. It was suggested that these be considered further by the proposed Task Force on Capacity Building.

Regular self-assessment of capacity building needs: Within the context of establishing a systematic approach to assessing and prioritizing capacity building needs, one effective approach might be to establish a process for periodic national self-assessment of capacity building needs in the context of IPBES. Such assessments could also provide the basis for assessing progress in addressing needs. Following discussion of this issue, participants thought that there was potential merit in considering the idea further, and suggested that this was something that could be considered by the proposed Task Force on Capacity Building drawing on the discussion in Kuala Lumpur which is summarised in Section 3.2 of the report.

### *Potential mechanisms and activities for supporting capacity building*

Forum with sources of funding: IPBES is mandated to provide a forum with conventional and potential sources of funding in order to catalyse support for addressing priority capacity building needs, and the next steps in achieving this are included in the draft work programme. In discussing the forum, participants suggested that the first meeting of the forum would focus in particular on review of capacity building needs and the IPBES work programme to establish what needs the forum would address and how they would be addressed. Subsequent meetings would have

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<sup>1</sup> UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9

<sup>2</sup> IPBES/1/INF/10 (noting also Annex 1)

<sup>3</sup> UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/INF/10

<sup>4</sup> See Sections B and C of IPBES/1/INF/10

a broader scope, as well as reviewing outcomes of the first meeting to evaluate progress. Further detail is included in Section 4.1 of the report.

‘Matchmaking’ facility: It has been proposed that IPBES should establish a ‘matchmaking’ facility to bring together those who have a capacity building need with those able to help meet that need (whether financial or technical). While this was discussed at length, and a number of recommendations made, it was recognised that more work needed to be done to define what exactly the ‘matchmaking’ facility would address and how, and to clarify its relationship with other IPBES-related activities. A summary of the discussion and recommendations is provided in Section 4.2 of the report.

Task forces: The draft IPBES work programme proposes two task forces,<sup>5</sup> one on capacity building and the other on access to knowledge and data (something also identified by participants as a capacity building need). Participants spent some time discussing the role of each of these task forces, their responsibilities, and their *modus operandi*. Based on this discussion, draft terms of reference for each of the two task forces have been prepared and are included in Annex 5 (Draft Terms of Reference for the Task Force on Knowledge and Data) and Annex 6 (Draft Terms of Reference for the Task Force on Capacity Building).

Securing high level interest and engagement: Participants were invited to consider whether a high level panel on capacity building might be a valuable approach for drawing attention to the need for capacity building in the context of IPBES. This idea was rejected by the meeting in favour of ad-hoc High Level Multi-Stakeholder meetings, which it was suggested might be convened to strengthen engagement of high-level stakeholders and end-users of IPBES activities from the private sector, government ministries (including those other than environment) and international organizations. Discussion on this issue and the suggestions made are summarised in Section 4.3 of the report.

Role of networks: Within the draft work programme it is clearly recognised that the capacities needed to implement the Platform’s work programme and meet its aims would be developed with support provided by a geographically widespread network of institutions and initiatives. Participants suggested that one of the first steps might be to develop a ‘mind map’ of all existing networks relevant to IPBES, and that based on this the Task Force on Capacity Building should develop a network of networks that would support and sustain capacity building in a flexible manner. Discussion on this issue and the suggestions made are summarised in Section 5.1 of the report.

Communities of practice: Communities of practice such as the Sub-Global Assessment Network can provide very effective support for capacity building, helping to share knowledge and experience, while at the same time promoting and facilitating national-level ecosystem assessment. Participants identified a number of areas where communities of practice could provide direct support to capacity building necessary for implementing the draft work programme. This might involve IPBES in identifying and working with existing communities of practice so that they better address needs identified by IPBES. Discussion on this issue and the suggestions made are summarised in Section 5.2 of the report, but this will also need considering in the context of the ‘mind map’ referred to in the previous paragraph.

Online tools and resources: Providing they are set up correctly, and respond to clearly defined user-needs, online tools can provide effective access to data, information and knowledge for all stakeholders. They can also provide a range of tools that promote and facilitate collaboration and networking. However many web resources already exist, and it is important to build on what is available. The BES-Net web portal currently under development by UNDP has the potential to support capacity building relevant to IPBES provided it is set up in an appropriate manner and draws on other available tools and resources. Discussion and suggestions relating to this issue can be found in Section 5.3 of the report.

Centres of excellence: Centres of excellence at all levels, from sub-national to regional, could provide vital capacity building support, sharing their experience with institutions in other countries within their regions and contributing to a range of IPBES deliverables. Effective use of regional ‘hubs’ and national centres of excellence by IPBES could support IPBES sub-regional assessments and help promote south-south cooperation, building on similar work within other fora, and also help further develop ‘triangular cooperation’ (north-south-south). Recommendations on development of networks of regional ‘hubs’ and national centres of excellence could be supported through an assessment of needs and opportunities, and convening a meeting to review the outcome of such an assessment. Discussion and suggestions relating to this issue can be found in Section 5.4 of the report.

Fellowships, secondments, scholarships and exchanges: Participants generally agreed that in order to ensure the sustainability and success of the Platform’s work in strengthening the science-policy interface, opportunities must be

<sup>5</sup> See objective 1 in IPBES/2/2 and IPBES/2/2/Add.1

provided to professionals, scientists and practitioners at all stages of their careers to work alongside and learn from others. This could be provided through a variety of means, including a fellowship programme, and each should be considered further. Criteria for selection of fellows and potential structure of fellowship programs are outlined in Section 5.6 of the report, which also provides comments on other potential means of extending the experience of individuals.

## 1. Introduction

Throughout the discussions leading to establishment of IPBES, capacity building has been recognised as being vital to the Platform's success. As a result, when IPBES was established in Panama last year, capacity building was not only clearly identified as one of the four functions of IPBES, it was also firmly established within the IPBES Operating Principles that capacity building should be integrated into all relevant aspects of the Platform's work.<sup>6</sup>

In December 2013, it is anticipated that the IPBES Plenary will adopt a work programme and an associated budget for the period 2014 – 2018 that will essentially operationalise the Platform. The draft work programme (which is set out in working documents IPBES/2/2 and IPBES/2/2/Ad.1) includes two substantive deliverables (deliverables 1(a) and 1(b)) that relate directly to ensuring that capacity building is integrated into the Platform's work.

In order to further discussion on capacity building in advance of the second IPBES plenary meeting, the IPBES Chair, Professor Zakri Abdul Hamid, convened an informal consultation on IPBES and capacity building, which took place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 4-6 November 2013. This meeting was attended by 85 invited participants from more than 50 countries, and representatives of a number of key organizations including all four United Nations bodies closely associated with IPBES.

The aim of the meeting was to build further understanding and hopefully a convergence of views on how capacity building could and should be addressed in the context of IPBES, in the hope that these discussions and this resulting report would help to inform IPBES-2, making it easier to reach consensus and to take decisions. With this in mind a substantial proportion of the meeting comprised discussion amongst participants in breakout groups.

The meeting was supported by the Governments of Malaysia and Norway, and technical and logistical support was provided by the Norwegian Environment Agency, the Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology, the University of Malaya and the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre. The programme for the meeting can be found in Annex 1, and the list of participants in Annex 2.

## 2. Capacity building needs and mechanisms

In preparation for the first IPBES Plenary held in January 2013, Governments and other stakeholders were invited to make submissions on capacity building needs and suggestions for activities and partnerships that might address those needs. A synthesis of these submissions was prepared by the interim secretariat,<sup>7</sup> which provided useful summaries of both capacity building needs and opportunities. These summaries were provided as an input to the informal consultation, and were further reviewed by the meeting, which also took into account the results of questionnaires on capacity building needs and opportunities completed by participants in a number of regional consultation meetings.

Following discussion, the revised annotated lists of capacity building needs and mechanisms are provided in Annexes 3 and 4, and are summarised in the two tables below. In considering the lists in these two tables it is important to recognise the fundamental importance of language, and providing support and supporting materials in appropriate languages.

**Table 1 Key capacity building needs (described in more detail in Annex 3)**

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increase capacity to carry out and use national and regional assessments</li> <li>○ Develop capacity to locate and mobilize financial and technical resources</li> <li>○ Improve access to data, information and knowledge (including publications), and to lessons learned</li> <li>○ Enhance multi-stakeholder engagement</li> <li>○ Develop capacity to bring together science with local knowledge</li> <li>○ Improve capacity for trans-disciplinary and trans-sectoral communication and collaboration</li> </ul> |
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<sup>6</sup> UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9 Report of the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of the plenary meeting to determine modalities and institutional arrangements for IPBES

<sup>7</sup> IPBES/1/INF/10 Compilation of the capacity building needs on the basis of input by Governments and other stakeholders and capacity building needs identified in multilateral environmental agreement reports

- Ensure the necessary human resource and skills base
- Enhance the ability to participate effectively in IPBES assessments

**Table 2 – Key capacity building mechanisms (described in more detail in Annex 4)**

**PROMOTING ASSESSMENTS, AND INCREASING FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT**

- Promoting national and regional assessments
- Matchmaking between those who have resources, and those who need them
- Developing tools to assist the translation of scientific and indigenous knowledge into policy
- Establishing fellowship and mentoring programmes

**BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS AND INCREASING COLLABORATION**

- Developing key partnerships and promoting the role of supporting organizations
- Ensuring a coordinated approach amongst organizations supporting capacity building
- Supporting development, and using existing experience, of national and regional centres of excellence
- Promoting and supporting universities and research institutions
- Encouraging increased use of multi-stakeholder dialogues

**BUILDING NETWORKS AND APPROACHES FOR SHARING DATA, INFORMATION AND LESSONS LEARNED**

- Promoting and supporting communities of practice and knowledge networks
- Promoting and supporting data and information networks, and web portals
- Developing and implementing effective communication strategies at all levels
- Developing a network of IPBES focal points

**ONGOING EVALUATION OF CAPACITY NEEDS, AND ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS IN ADDRESSING THEM**

- Identifying capacity building needs and opportunities as part of scoping processes
- Continued consultation on capacity building needs and opportunities
- National self-assessment of capacity building needs
- Periodic evaluation of capacity building efforts

In addition it was emphasised that capacity building is a long-term process, requiring sustained financial and technical support. Previous initiatives have sometimes ended prematurely after a few months or years due to loss of government support or financial backing, in particular when projects rely on international funding or expertise. The meeting therefore highlighted the need for capacity building mechanisms that employ local expertise and sustainable sources of funding, using all data, information and knowledge available (including non-published material and traditional knowledge), and in all appropriate languages.

Discussions also reiterated the operating principles of IPBES which call for a ‘collaborative approach building on existing initiatives and experiences’. This would include strengthening current capacity building projects as well as using existing capacity building frameworks such as the UNDP capacity assessment framework<sup>8</sup> as guidance for identifying and implementing new capacity building initiatives. During its capacity building work the Platform must consider the individual needs of national members and ensure that mechanisms to deliver capacity are tailored to meet these differing needs, including delivery in appropriate languages.

### **3. Feedback relating to prioritization and monitoring of capacity needs**

#### **3.1. Means for prioritizing capacity building needs**

It has already been decided in the functions of IPBES that the Platform will prioritize key capacity building needs to improve the science-policy interface at appropriate levels, but as yet no decision has been taken on how this will be done. Establishment of criteria and a process for doing this is important, given the breadth of capacity building needs and potential mechanisms identified in annexes 3 and 4.

<sup>8</sup> UNDP, 2008. Capacity Assessment Methodology: User’s Guide. New York: UNDP.



The overarching criteria for selecting capacity building activities are that they support the overall objectives of the Platform (i.e. that they strengthen the science-policy interface), and that they support implementation of the Platform's work programme, therefore, capacity building activities should:

- enhance the ability to conduct demand-driven multidisciplinary national and sub-regional assessments involving all relevant stakeholders in co-design, co-production and co-dissemination
- enhance the ability of Governments, private sector and civil society to utilize the findings of national, sub-regional, regional and global assessments in informed national and sub-regional (for trans-boundary issues) decision-making
- assist in stimulating regional and global awareness and action

Within this context, criteria should also increase focus on: ensuring sustainability (including through use of appropriate languages); involving the full range of relevant stakeholders; ensuring that activities are demand-driven from the user communities; increasing access to appropriate tools and methodologies; and involving outreach and communication. In addition criteria should focus on activities which help countries to address existing global commitments on biodiversity and ecosystem services (for example focusing on achieving the Aichi targets).

In the context of these criteria, where IPBES has access to funding it should prioritize its financial support for activities that enhance implementation of the work programme. The Platform should use mechanisms such as the forum with funders and the proposed matchmaking facility to stimulate funding for the broader activities that promote the overall objectives of the IPBES.

It is suggested that the proposed Task Force on Capacity Building, addressed further below, could advise the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP) on which capacity building proposals meet the overall criteria, and in turn the MEP and Bureau would advise the Plenary.

### **3.2. National self-assessment of capacity building needs**

One effective means of identifying capacity building needs and helping to prioritize them might be to establish a process for periodic national self-assessment of capacity needs in the context of IPBES, and this is something that could be usefully considered by the proposed Task Force on Capacity Building (see below). Provided these assessments are carried out in a consistent and comparative manner, they could provide the basis for:

- providing a common framework and guidance on how to understand capacity needs in the context of IPBES, including mapping identified capacity needs against capacity needs implied by the work programme
- identifying and prioritizing needs in order to provide input to each meeting of the proposed forum with conventional and potential sources of funding
- identifying and prioritizing needs to provide input to other mechanisms established by the Platform to address capacity building needs, such as the proposed 'matchmaking' facility
- helping to establish a baseline of existing capacity needs, and to monitor and evaluate progress in addressing identified needs and priorities and in building capacity
- providing an opportunity for country-driven solutions to be identified alongside solutions that require external/IPBES support
- raising awareness about IPBES and creating ownership

For self assessment to be effective there would need to be guidance provided (in order to ensure consistency and comparability), and it would be important to ensure that all countries were able to undertake such self-assessments. This would probably require the following:

- an established process – linked to other processes as appropriate - which encourages and as necessary facilitates each country to undertake such an assessment
- a process that is user-friendly, flexible enough to be adjustable to different conditions of countries, and not one that over-burdens countries' capacities
- a process that covers all aspects of capacity needs, ranging from human and technical capacity, to access to data, information and knowledge, and to financial capacity
- support for those countries with insufficient capacity to carry out self-assessments, through training in use of guidelines and/or access to trained facilitators

A process and guidelines for self-assessment could be developed by the proposed Task Force on Capacity Building, drawing on lessons learnt from other similar processes and taking advantage of existing tools and guidelines that could be built on. However, the self-assessment process and guidance would need to be developed in an open and participatory manner in order to ensure buy-in and ownership by all relevant stakeholders. While the primary focus would be on national level assessment, it could also usefully address capacity building needs at the regional level (e.g. with regards to regional centres of excellence).

It is anticipated that a process for self-assessment of capacity needs in the context of IPBES would include: review of individual, institutional and systemic capacity; consideration of access to necessary human, technical data and financial resources; and capacity of practitioners. However, such a review might also consider opportunities as well as needs, including, for example, opportunities for matchmaking and/or south-south cooperation, and the opportunity provided by alignment with other processes (such as the current updating of NBSAPs and preparation of National Reports).

## **4. Feedback relating to mobilizing resources for addressing capacity needs**

### **4.1. Forum with conventional and potential sources of funding**

Within the functions of IPBES it has already been agreed that the Platform will provide a forum with conventional and potential sources of funding with the aim of catalysing support for addressing priority capacity building needs. According to the draft work programme it is also envisaged that the forum would help advise the Plenary on the identification of priority capacity building needs, and make recommendations on the development and implementation of the proposed 'matchmaking' facility.

Capacity building is a long-term process that requires sustainable financial support, and it was recognised that a forum with sources of funding could assist in identifying and advertising appropriate financial resources. Therefore, with respect to the role and structure of a forum with sources of funding, it was agreed that:

- priority capacity building needs considered by the first forum should reflect the fact that each region and country will have different capacity building needs and priorities
- the structure of the forum must integrate lessons learned from previous forums and funding initiatives, so as to ensure the success and sustainability of the forum
- the forum should not be considered a standing body but a regular meeting of interested participants/stakeholders
- participants in the forum would be likely to vary depending on the particular issues covered at each meeting of the forum

It was proposed that the first meeting of the forum with sources of funding should focus on 'bedrock issues', and in particular a review of priority capacity building needs and the IPBES work programme to establish what needs the forum would address and how they would be addressed. In this context, the forum must review and build on previous experiences of addressing capacity building needs to ensure the success of its activities. It has also been suggested that the first meeting of the forum should also address the potential need for and support of a fellowship programme. Participants at the first meeting would be those who have already expressed an interest in participating in the forum (both individual national participants and representatives of organizations). In particular, participants would include government representatives able to pledge funds, the private sector and foundations which could offer sources of financial support for IPBES activities. However the forum needs to also address other types of in-kind support (apart from financial support) and more thought needs to be given to how this might be achieved.

It was proposed that the second and subsequent meetings of the forum with sources of funding would discuss wider capacity building needs, reviewing outcomes of the first forum to evaluate progress and consolidate the role of the forum in identified areas.

### **4.2. Proposed 'matchmaking' facility**

One of the activities suggested in the draft work programme is the establishment of a potential 'matchmaking' facility which could be used to help bring together those who have a capacity building need with those able to help meet that need. Such a facility could be used for helping to locate financial support on an ongoing basis (as opposed to the periodic forum), but it might just as easily be useful in locating technical support, in facilitating the exchange of scientific expertise, or in helping to promote and locate training opportunities, and it could also offer an opportunity for local or indigenous communities to connect

and support each other. Examples of such facilities include the CBD LifeWeb, or the recently launched UNCCD 'Marketplace'.

There was general agreement that the facility should be focused on tackling a relatively small number of capacity needs prioritized by the IPBES Plenary, at least at first, as a more narrow focus would increase the feasibility of the facility and its attractiveness to potential donors. However without having defined the priority capacity building needs that would be addressed, it was challenging to discuss the scope and framework of the potential 'matchmaking' facility. Views varied widely on who the main stakeholders would be, ranging from including stakeholders at all levels of society and particularly local or indigenous communities, to including only national, regional and international governments and organizations. These responses reflect differences of opinion over the extent to which the matchmaking facility could act as a stakeholder engagement tool, and this needs further consideration.

There needs to be a clearly defined relationship between the activities of the proposed matchmaking facility and other IPBES capacity building mechanisms, including the forum, the proposed task force, BES-Net, networking initiatives and communities of practice. However it is challenging to define the boundaries between each of these various initiatives without understanding in more detail the aims or roles of each. In addition, these relationships will partially help to define the type of stakeholders that the facility would address, the 'types' of matchmaking that would be facilitated, and the extent to which the facility would act as a stakeholder engagement tool.

Based on the above it was agreed that:

- the facility should be an online tool, although it may be necessary to also utilise other approaches to ensure that there is equal opportunity to access the tool given different capacities to access information technologies
- depending on the 'types' of matchmaking that it enables, the facility could be a single tool split into several modules, each covering a different 'type' of matchmaking
- the design of the facility should incorporate lessons learned from pre-existing matchmaking facilities to ensure its success and sustainability

#### **4.3. Securing high level interest and engagement**

Consideration was given as to whether there was a need to establish a High Level Panel on Capacity Building. It was quickly concluded that the establishment of a High Level Panel on Capacity Building was not necessary because IPBES already proposes to support capacity building through mechanisms such as a task force, 'matchmaking' facility, forum with conventional and potential sources of funding, and other networking initiatives.

However, it was concluded that there is a need to strengthen engagement with high-level stakeholders and end-users of IPBES activities from the private sector, government ministries (including those other than ministries of environment), and international organizations to ensure IPBES is meeting their needs and because these organizations offer potential sources of financial or in-kind support. Consequently, it was suggested that for the Platform to engage these stakeholders effectively, IPBES should be represented at high-level international meetings such as the World Economic Forum (business leaders and finance ministers), World Business Council for Sustainable Development (business leaders), World Bank meetings (finance and development ministers), and meetings at FAO (agriculture ministers), UNESCO (science ministers) and UNDP (development ministers).

In addition, it was suggested that an ad-hoc High Level Multi-Stakeholder Panel should be convened every 2-3 years as part of the assessment and evaluation process of IPBES, which could provide a means of engaging these stakeholders and drawing attention to IPBES. Members of the Panel could include government ministers (including from ministries other than environment, e.g. agriculture, economics, finance); CEOs of large corporations, foundations, NGOs and ex-ministers and CEOs. Such a Panel would offer a macro-scale assessment of whether IPBES is meeting the needs of high-level users, and could help further promote IPBES.

The need to routinely engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders at the national and regional levels in IPBES was emphasized. This could be accomplished at the national level by creating national IPBES committees, which would identify national capacity building needs. Committee members could include IPBES national focal points, MEA focal points, government ministers, civil society, the private sector, NGOs, research organizations and other local organizations.

## 5. Feedback relating to networks and networking supporting capacity building activities

### 5.1. Role that networks can play in capacity building

Within the draft work programme it is clearly recognised that the capacities needed to implement the Platform's work programme and meet its aims would be developed with support provided by a geographically widespread network of institutions and initiatives.<sup>9</sup> This recognises the fact that there are many existing organizations and networks already working in this area which IPBES can draw on, and which can help support IPBES and meet their own objectives at the same time.

Many of the relevant institutions are already networks or part of relevant networks, so one of the first actions could be to identify the key players and begin to develop a 'mindmap' of all the existing networks relevant to IPBES. This could even be done through BES-Net (see below), the IPBES website or another means as a dynamic catalogue of networks and their members. Examples that could be built on include the following:

- Globally active networks such as the Sub-Global Assessment Network, Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF), Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network (GEO BON), Biodiversity Indicators Partnership (BIP), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Clearing House Mechanism of the Convention on Biological Diversity (including national implementation), and BES-Net
- Regionally active networks such as the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), or the AfriBes (AfriSeb) network
- Nationally active networks such as the Network-Forum for Biodiversity Research (NeFo) in Germany, Fondation pour la Recherche sur la Biodiversité (FRB) in France, national clearing house mechanisms and a web-based networking tool that is being developed in China

In order to establish a functional network it will be important to carry out the following, under the auspices of the Bureau and the proposed Task Force on Capacity Building:

- drawing on the 'mindmap', build on already existing organizations and networks, giving due consideration to the most appropriate means for securing engagement
- build institutional capacity to facilitate the engagement of communities of practice with IPBES where it doesn't yet exist
- develop a framework for how to link up with networks, for example through strategic partnership arrangements or through the stakeholder engagement strategy
- align the focus of networks with well-defined themes, goals and deliverables such as those arising from the IPBES work programme
- recognise that what keeps a network alive is a pro-active animator/facilitator to promote and manage information flow, and to facilitate exchanges and common undertakings

In building networks it is important to also understand what participating organizations and networks would hope to gain from participation in IPBES-related networks, so as to help to ensure the sustainability of such networks. This might include providing motivation through:

- ensuring that institutions that engage gain prestige/recognition for doing so
- enhancing their capacities to address their existing commitments
- supporting improved information flows
- providing opportunities for strengthened influence through collaboration
- helping to increase the sustainability of such networks

A range of examples of types of network and their potential for supporting capacity building with respect to IPBES are addressed in the following sections.

### 5.2. Support from communities of practice

A community of practice (or community of interest) can be defined as an informal, self-organized network of peers with diverse skills and experience in an area of practice or profession. Such groups are held together by the

<sup>9</sup> IPBES/2/2 and IPBES/2/2/Add.1

members' desire to help others (by sharing information and knowledge) and the need to advance their own knowledge (by learning from others).<sup>10</sup> Key features of communities of practice are common interests and working together towards common goals.

In the context of IPBES a good example of a community of practice, and one that is referred to in the draft work programme, is the Sub-Global Assessment Network. The SGA Network is a knowledge-sharing platform for practitioners involved in ecosystem assessment work, established with the intention of promoting and facilitating improved capacity for undertaking and using assessments.

Review of the draft work programme suggests a number of areas where communities of practice could provide support, both to programme implementation and to associated capacity building. These can be associated with particular work programme objectives and deliverables, but in many cases are relevant to multiple deliverables. These include, but are not restricted to the following, some of which already exist but others may need establishing:

- Indigenous/traditional knowledge
- Ecosystem Services Partnership
- Scientific communities
- Biodiversity informatics
- SGA Network (for sharing knowledge and experience on ecosystem assessment)
- Tools and methods for economic valuation
- Modelling and scenarios
- Sectoral communities relevant to IPBES, such as agriculture and biodiversity
- Groups with specific experience in engagement and messaging

Most effective is to identify existing communities of practice that can support implementation of the IPBES work programme, including capacity building in the context of IPBES. These should be identified based on a recognised need, and might include not only thematic and activity-specific communities of practice at global and regional levels, but also national and sub-national communities of practice identified by IPBES Members.

Key considerations when engaging with communities of practice include the need for effective communication, and the importance of building on existing capacity. This may include IPBES playing a role in helping to build the capacity and reach of existing communities of practice so that they become effective in the context of IPBES and IPBES-related capacity building. This may include further consideration of issues such as language, and access to information technology.

### **5.3. Support from online tools and resources**

Online tools such as web portals and clearing house mechanisms can provide an effective means for increasing access to data, information and knowledge. When well designed and managed, and clearly focused on user needs, they can provide tools that help users to find the information that they need from amongst a wealth of other data, information and knowledge across a range of other websites and resources.

Although still in development, one example of such a web portal is the BES-Net Web Portal being developed by the United Nations Development Programme. Drawing on experience from web portals on climate change and international waters (CC:Learn and IW:Learn respectively) this web portal aims to facilitate access to the work of those developing capacity at the interface between science, policy and practice. A draft strategy for development and implementation of the BES-Net web portal is currently out for review.

It is recognised that the BES-Net Web Portal will not be effective if it is just another mediocre website, and it must therefore address a specific niche and respond to recognised user needs. This is addressed in the draft strategy, which proposes a focus on: the science-policy-practice interface; understanding ecosystem services and other aspects of biodiversity from a human perspective; locating information and knowledge directly relevant to decision makers; and addressing communities which are particularly vulnerable to biodiversity loss.

Many online tools and resources exist, and it is important to build on what is already there, and not create unnecessary competition. In the light of this it is important for any new initiatives such as BES-Net to align closely with the IPBES website, and to forge appropriate links to the CBD Clearing House Mechanism, the UNCCD Capacity Building Marketplace and similar mechanisms of other Multilateral Environmental Agreements. This may be

<sup>10</sup> Adapted from BusinessDictionary.com

something for the Task Force on Capacity Building (or possibly the Task Force on Data and Knowledge) to help ensure.

There are close links between online web tools and communities of practice, and both would act together to support implementation of the work programme through activities such as:

- communication of key messages from assessments to influence policy and implementation
- building capacity to access and use data, information and knowledge from multiple sources
- improving interlinkages between key resources at all levels
- linking policy makers and practitioners to researchers to help define research agendas

It is important to remember that many portals and other information resources also already exist at the national level, and it may be important to help find ways to better link these together so that they are more widely available and better integrated. This can also increase opportunities for access through other global and regional portals, and may be assisted through targeted collaboration with other international programmes, such as the CBD Clearing House Mechanism. This may need further analysis to work out the most appropriate approach in the context of IPBES.

#### **5.4. *Support from national and regional centres of excellence***

Regional hubs and national centres of excellence can potentially play a significant role in providing capacity building support relevant to IPBES at regional, sub-regional, national and sub-national scales. This might include the following:

- helping to establish a clear agenda on policy gaps with respect to biodiversity context
- supporting the identification and prioritization of capacity building needs
- catalyzing capacity building efforts
- enhancing collaboration, responsiveness and ownership
- mapping existing knowledge holders/hubs and key players
- facilitating the building of bridges between science and policy
- acting as ambassador for institutions in their sphere of influence, helping them to engage
- facilitating data sharing

However, it is important to recognise that there are different kinds of centres of excellence. Relevant organizations vary widely in terms of their scope, capability, capacity, scale of operation, thematic expertise, and so on. As a result some definition or guidance may be necessary on what is understood by a centre of excellence, something which becomes even more critical if decisions need to be taken on which centres of excellence IPBES might work with when planning activities at the regional level. A set of criteria and/or guidelines would need to be established on how to identify centres of excellence, or how to help those centres of excellence identify themselves as such. Criteria or guidance could be based on the issues identified above, and also on the extent to which these potential centres of excellence are recognized in their region/country, and their credibility, legitimacy and degree of representation.

The value of having regional hubs becomes self-evident when looking at the huge 'shopping list' of capacity building needs, and cooperation/coordination among regional hubs and national centres of excellence, and sharing experience, would further add to the value of this approach. Arrangements within regions can be fairly independent and self organized (unlike coordination amongst thematic centres of excellence which is more likely to be dependent on the secretariat or associated technical support units). Where it is possible to link the management of regional hubs to existing policy-related regional processes (such as the European Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or the Southern Africa Development Community) in collaboration with IPBES, there is a potential opportunity to promote effective cooperation among national centres of excellence.

One additional issue that will need to be considered is what to do when a region or country has not identified a centre of excellence, or where their current centre of excellence is not fully representative of their region or country, or is not functioning effectively. This is clearly likely to be a capacity issue, and would need to be addressed as a priority through capacity building activities so as to either strengthen the existing centre or identify/develop a new one as is appropriate to the circumstances and national and/or regional need.



Effective use of regional hubs and national centres of excellence by IPBES could help promote south-south cooperation, building on similar work within other fora (for example within the Convention on Biological Diversity which has adopted a Multi-Year Plan of Action for South-South Cooperation on Biodiversity for Development), and on other capacity building collaboration including 'triangular cooperation (north-south-south). South-south cooperation is currently underutilized as a capacity building opportunity, and it could at the same time help raise levels of interest on challenges that the south is facing such as biopiracy.

In addition to the criteria and guidance indicated above, a number of other actions may be necessary in order to develop/strengthen the institutional arrangement necessary to operationalize regional hubs and networks of national centres of excellence. This is likely to include the identification of various types of support including technical, financial and human. This could be carried out as part of the IPBES capacity building activities, and addressed by the forum and Task Force on Capacity Building as appropriate. The forum and Task Force on Capacity Building could also take up the issue of south-south cooperation.

Development of networks of regional hubs and national centres of excellence could be supported by carrying out a review of needs and opportunities, and convening a meeting to review these needs and opportunities before discussion at the forum or Task Force on Capacity Building. This could be supported by a catalogue of centres of excellence similar to the catalogue of assessments.

### **5.5. Improving access to data, information and knowledge**

It has already been recognised that improved access to data, information and knowledge is a key capacity building need,<sup>11</sup> including access to publications, and the related challenges of different languages and different capacities to access information technology. As a result the following are key issues to be included in the responsibilities of the proposed Task Force on Knowledge and Data:

- identifying the best means of addressing the data and information needs identified through IPBES scoping and assessment, and supporting their implementation
- identifying opportunities for increasing access to existing data, information and knowledge so that it is available for supporting decision making at all levels
- supporting the secretariat in overseeing curation of data, information and knowledge used in developing IPBES products so as to ensure its long term availability

The proposal for a task force was generally welcomed, although a number of specific comments were made on the terms of reference for such a task force. In particular:

- it was considered that the task force should have an independent chair rather than be chaired by one or more members of the Bureau as is currently proposed
- reference to 'management' of knowledge and data in the task force description (section D of IPBES/2/2) was thought unclear - whose data and knowledge is being referred to?
- it was suggested that it should be made clearer at various points what scale or level the task force would be operating (local, national, sub-regional, regional, global)

Taking account of both the relevant text in IPBES/2/2 and IPBES/2/2/Add.1, and discussion during the informal consultation, draft terms of reference for the task force on knowledge and data are provided in Annex 5.

### **5.6. Fellowships, secondments, scholarships and exchanges**

It was recognised that it would be valuable to make fellowships available to a wide range of different types of individual, including those already with established careers (including senior scientists, and policymakers and decision makers from both government and non-government communities), early career professionals and scientists, and those from indigenous communities.

Fellows might carry out activities such as drafting or reviewing chapters of global, regional or thematic assessments, they might provide technical support or participate in scenario exercises, and their participation in meetings might be supported. They could be located in national or regional centres of excellence, with the IPBES Secretariat, or with technical support units. The duration of fellowships might vary depending on the type of activities they are undertaking.

<sup>11</sup> IPBES/1/INF/10 *Compilation of the capacity building needs on the basis of input by Governments and other stakeholders and capacity building needs identified in multilateral environmental agreement reports*

It was recognised that there was potential value in using an IPBES fellowship programme to promote collaboration and sharing of experience through: regional/bilateral collaboration; sharing of experience/exchange programmes between centres of excellence; using fellows to disseminate experience and skills in respective countries and regions; and developing and using alumni networks.

Criteria for selection of fellows would include: professional experience; academic experience; interest and passion; commitment to providing ongoing support in the future; current responsibilities; ensuring gender balance; ensuring balance of scientists and policy makers; and relevance to IPBES functions and principles. While the criteria might be fixed, the process for selection might vary depending on where the candidates were coming from.

However in addition to these criteria it was also thought valuable to consider institutional capacity rather than just individuals, and therefore to focus on individuals who could commit to making substantive contribution to their home institutions following the fellowship. In this regard it was also seen as valuable to consider fellowships for a team of people from an institution, instead of just one individual.

In order to attract the right individuals the fellowship programme should be advertised widely. This would include information disseminations not just to focal points in institutions or countries, but through every appropriate network including those serving indigenous communities. It would also be valuable to promote the fellowship programme with potential donors who might support additional fellows.

In addition to fellowships, it was also considered valuable for IPBES to encourage secondments from relevant organizations and institutions, in particular because of the potential for IPBES to improve collaboration with those organizations and institutions, and for developing ongoing relationships and commitment. In this regard many of the points made above would also apply to secondments.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) provides a number of scholarships each year for selected individuals to carry out doctoral research on issues related to climate change. While this was thought to be very valuable and relevant to the interests of the Platform, it was thought likely to be too expensive to consider at present.

## 6. Feedback relating to the proposed task force on capacity building

Within the draft work programme there is a proposal for the establishment of a Task Force on Capacity Building which is expected to support the implementation of the work programme with respect to capacity building, bringing together the most relevant networks and communities of practice by means of strategic partnerships. The intended work of the task force is described in the draft work programme.<sup>12,13</sup>

A number of 'key principles' or messages relating specifically to the role, responsibilities and composition of the task force were identified. These included the following:

- ensure that the task force plays an effective role in coordinating and integrating capacity building activities in the context of IPBES, and avoiding duplication, through the links the task force makes to existing institutions
- recognise the need for wide participation so that all key stakeholders are included or at least represented, and so that the task force is not just 'top down' in composition and approach. This would include:
  - sufficient Bureau members to ensure appropriate representation of regions, and inclusion of additional representatives of IPBES members if necessary
  - sufficient MEP members to ensure appropriate representation of disciplines and knowledge systems, and inclusion of additional individual experts if necessary
  - representatives of key institutions associated with capacity building in order to secure their support in implementing capacity building in the context of IPBES
- review existing capacity building needs and opportunities, and the ongoing activities of a range of organizations at national, regional and global levels as a basis for:
  - prioritizing capacity building needs in the context of IPBES as is requested in the functions of the Platform

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<sup>12</sup> IPBES/2/2 and IPBES/2/2/Add.1

<sup>13</sup> IPBES/2/INF/10



- identifying what capacity building works and what does not work, and how to ensure IPBES-related capacity building is both effective and sustainable
- developing increased understanding of opportunities for ‘matchmaking’ between needs and opportunities so as to help support development of the matchmaking facility
- guiding the form and agenda of the proposed forum with conventional and potential sources of funding
- identify clearly the relationship between the task force and other activities and institutional arrangements for implementation of the work programme, so as to ensure cooperation, build on potential synergies, avoid duplication of effort, and increase awareness

There were differences of opinion on whether the task force should have a short time span (say 3-6 months) after which the Bureau would implement its recommendations, or whether the task force should be established for the whole period of the work programme up to 2018. As the responsibilities and potentially the composition of the task force would necessarily be different under these two scenarios, the two options are set out below.

For the option where the task force was established for the life of the work programme, it was agreed that it would be chaired by a Bureau member and would support implementation of the work programme through carrying out the following activities to support and advise the Bureau, MEP and the Secretariat:

- propose a systematic approach to identify and prioritize capacity building needs in the context of IPBES, and identify associated financing gaps and potential sources of funding
- propose means that could be developed for effectively integrating identified capacity building needs into the policies and programmes of development assistance processes
- organize the forum with conventional and potential sources of funding, including providing advice on both the agenda and participation
- implement a ‘matchmaking’ facility to help match available technical and financial resources with priority capacity building needs
- put in place a process for monitoring and evaluating the provision of capacity building activities in the context of IPBES
- ensuring that all of the above activities draw effectively on existing experience, and complement and build on existing initiatives on biodiversity and ecosystem services
- advising on strategic partnerships that help deliver capacity building in the context of IPBES, and promote and facilitate other activities that have the same effect

For the option where the task force was established for 3-6 months, the task force would be chaired by an independent expert (rather than a Bureau member, as proposed in the draft work programme) and the focus of the work of the task force would be to provide advice and guidance for the development of processes by the existing subsidiary bodies and the secretariat. The main areas of responsibility would be to:

- develop criteria for prioritization of capacity building needs
- develop a methodology for capacity building
- recommend a process for delivering capacity building
- agree a methodology for monitoring and evaluating delivery of capacity building

Taking account of both the relevant text in IPBES/2/2 and IPBES/2/2/Add.1 and discussion during the informal consultation, draft terms of reference for the task force on capacity building are provided in Annex 6.

## Annex 1: Agenda

### MONDAY 4 NOVEMBER (AFTERNOON)

#### Setting the stage for the meeting

- **Keynote presentation by IPBES Chair** stressing the importance of the first IPBES work programme in establishing how IPBES will work in the future, underlining the absolute importance of capacity building in this regard, and setting out what the meeting aims to achieve including observations of how the results from this meeting might feed into the Plenary.
- **Briefing by the IPBES interim secretariat** on the status of preparations for the second IPBES Plenary meeting to be held in Antalya, Turkey in December.

#### Session One - Capacity building needs and priorities

The aim of this session is to ensure a thorough common understanding of capacity building needs and opportunities for advancing knowledge generation, assessments and policy support. This would include review and update of existing summaries of needs and opportunities based on formal submissions by Governments and other stakeholders, and consideration of how these needs would be prioritized. There would be at least three outputs:

- a revised annotated list of capacity building needs
- a revised annotated list of capacity building opportunities
- a list of criteria for prioritizing capacity building needs and opportunities

- **Introduction by the meeting secretariat** to the breakout group discussions, identifying what is expected, and running through the documentation available for supporting discussions.

**Breakout groups 1 and 2** would review the capacity building needs and opportunities already identified through the submissions by Governments and other stakeholders. They would consider whether this was an adequate representation of needs and opportunities, and whether these needed to be redrafted in the context of experience since, including the results of the questionnaires.

**Breakout group 3** would consider what criteria should be used in prioritizing key capacity building needs to improve the science-policy interface at all levels as is called for in the functions of the platform, and how those criteria might be applied. Consideration would also be given to which needs IPBES could address in its programme and which ones IPBES could encourage others to address.

**Breakout group 4** would consider the potential value of regular self assessment of capacity needs – perhaps along the lines of the National Capacity Self Assessments – in order to help identify needs in a consistent manner, and to provide a baseline against which the delivery of capacity building can be assessed.

### TUESDAY 5 NOVEMBER

#### Session One - Capacity building needs and priorities (continued)

- **Brief report back in plenary** from each of the four breakout groups on the issues discussed, and their conclusions, followed by general discussion.

#### Session Two – Means for IPBES to address capacity building needs

The aim of this session is to consider in more detail the different mechanisms through which IPBES might support capacity building so as to achieve a common understanding of how these might be implemented. Consideration would be given both to addressing needs through multilateral processes within the IPBES mandate and to encouraging others to address needs multilaterally and through national development assistance. There would be three or four outputs:

- a set of options for implementing a forum with sources of funding, including terms of reference
- recommendations on what would be needed from a ‘matchmaking’ facility
- observations on how to implement other capacity building activities in the work programme

- **Keynote presentation** which illustrates what can be achieved through a coherent and well supported capacity building programme addressing well understood capacity building needs.

- **Introduction by the meeting secretariat** to the breakout group discussions, identifying what is expected, and running through the documentation available to support their discussions.
- **Breakout group 1** would consider how best to establish a forum with sources of funding, including issues such as agenda, participation, periodicity, inputs required, and what can be expected from such a forum. It is hoped that the group(s) would draft options and terms of reference that could be considered by the IPBES Plenary.
- **Breakout group 2** would consider how a matchmaking facility could be used to help bring together those who have a capacity building need with those able to help meeting that need, either technically or financially. It is hoped that the group(s) would make recommendations that help in the future development of such a facility should it prove a useful opportunity.
- **Breakout group 3** would consider the role and terms of reference of the proposed task force on capacity building, and how it might most effectively contribute to capacity building in the context of IPBES.
- **Breakout group 4** would discuss the role that networks of institutions, initiatives and experts, and associated online support tools, can play in helping to share experience and build capacity.

#### Moderated panel discussion – building on existing activities

The aims of this panel discussion would be to provide opportunity for a number of organizations which may be key players in supporting capacity building activities to talk briefly about their work and to debate with the moderator, other panellists and participants on how the work that they represent can be most usefully built upon.

#### Session Two – Means for IPBES to address capacity building needs (continued)

- **Brief report back in plenary** from each of the four breakout groups on the issues discussed and their conclusions, followed by discussion.

### WEDNESDAY 6 NOVEMBER

#### Session Three – Support for the IPBES capacity building function

The aim of this session is to consider in more detail the other functions that would help to support capacity building, and how the institutional arrangements for implementation of the work programme may also be significant in this respect. In this case the specific outputs would not be identified in advance but would be expected to arise from discussion.

- **Keynote presentation** on how increased networking and well designed online support tools can increase access to the knowledge and experience of others.
- **Keynote presentation** on the fundamental importance of improving access to existing data, information and knowledge.
- **Keynote presentation** which illustrates how certain national centres of excellence have been helping support capacity building at the regional level, and how this can be built upon.
- **Introduction by the meeting secretariat** to the breakout group discussions, identifying what is expected, and running through the documentation available to support their discussions.
- **Breakout groups** would discuss the following issues. The discussion group leaders will be aware in advance that they are leading these sessions, and would have been canvassing views and drawing elements from earlier sessions to feed into the discussions, including from the panel discussion on the previous day.
  - Group 1** The important contribution of national and regional centres of excellence which can provide support at regional and sub-regional levels.
  - Group 2** Needs and options for online web portals such as the proposed BES-Net Web Portal, and how they might be developed and used.
  - Group 3** Options for practical steps that can be taken to improve access to data, information and knowledge in the context of IPBES.
  - Group 4** The value of communities of practice in helping to share experience amongst practitioners, and how IPBES can promote their support and wider uptake.

- Group 5** Exploration of ways in which fellowships and secondments could be promoted by IPBES in order to foster increased collaborating and sharing of experience.
- Group 6** Consideration of the potential value of establishing a high level panel on capacity building in the context of IPBES, and how to go about doing this
- **Brief report back in plenary** from each of the six breakout groups on the issues discussed and their conclusions, followed by discussion.

#### **Closing session**

- **Opportunity to identify 'missing' issues** that have not been addressed in the meeting, or insufficiently addressed.
- **Clarification by the meeting secretariat** on the intended format of the meeting report, how the discussions and presentations will be used in completing the report, and the timetable for its delivery.
- **Closing remarks by the meeting organizers and sponsors**

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## Annex 3: Capacity Building Needs

***The following key capacity building needs have been identified and are described in more detail below:***

- Increase capacity to carry out and use national and regional assessments
- Develop capacity to locate and mobilize financial and technical resources
- Improve access to data, information and knowledge (including publications), and to lessons learned
- Enhance multi-stakeholder engagement
- Develop capacity to bring together science with local knowledge
- Improve capacity for trans-disciplinary and trans-sectoral communication and collaboration
- Ensure the necessary human resource and skills base
- Enhance the ability to participate effectively in IPBES assessments

In all cases it is essential to recognise the importance of working in appropriate languages

### **Increase capacity to carry out and use national and regional assessments**

- Assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services at the national and sub-national levels are important not only in the knowledge and outputs that they deliver but also through the processes that they establish and stakeholder engagement that they foster.
- While developing capacity for national level assessment is particularly critical, there are also a number of specific assessment-related needs, including:
  - Development and use of non-market-based methods of valuing biodiversity and ecosystem services
  - Need for assessments of specific priority habitats (e.g. mangroves)
  - Need for assessments of linked ecosystems that cross ecological and political boundaries (e.g. circumpolar environments or mangroves and coral reefs)
  - Training in the development and use of indicators
  - Support for carrying out TEEB-like assessments
  - Capacity for valuing and assessing management options and effectiveness
  - Capacity to access and use all relevant data, information and knowledge
- As well as supporting policy development and decision making at the national level, national assessments also provide a basis for national contributions to sub-regional, regional and global assessments.

### **Develop capacity to locate and mobilize financial and technical resources**

- Building institutional capacity to locate and mobilize financial and technical resources is essential for improving the science-policy interface.
- Limited funding (and the resulting lack of material resources or expertise) and technical resources prevent knowledge gaps, insufficient capacity and inefficient organizational processes at the science-policy interface from being addressed.
- This need reflects the limited funding currently available, the short-term nature of many sources of funding as well as the lack of funding mechanisms or expertise for effectively mobilizing financial support for projects.
- There is a need for clear communication of capacity building needs at relevant scales so as to facilitate involvement of funding donors.
- There is a need to find effective mechanisms for matching existing capacity and financial and technical support with identified needs.

**Improve access to data, information and knowledge (including publications), & to lessons learned**

- It is essential to have accessible, systematized information capable of generating the intelligence and knowledge necessary for supporting the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services. This includes the need for improved access to, and sharing of, knowledge including data, publications (scientific and gray literature) in different languages, information, experiences and lessons learned.
- In particular, there is a need for instruments and initiatives such as:
  - Web-based information systems for sharing data and information, and enhancing collaboration among research institutions and policymakers at national and regional scales (recognising and addressing where possible the challenges of language and differing capacities for using information technologies).
  - Mechanisms for sharing the experiences of countries and institutions in carrying out activities relevant to IPBES (which may include review of the use and future direction of the IPBES Catalogue of Assessments, and ways in which IPBES might engage with existing initiatives such as the Sub-Global Assessment Network or evolving initiatives such as BES-Net).
  - Mechanisms that support and encourage multi-disciplinary research.
  - Technology transfer that facilitates biodiversity taxonomy, monitoring and research.
  - Mapping of existing databases and information sharing mechanisms.
  - Approaches for conserving traditional knowledge.
- There is also a need to identify and address barriers to the sharing of data, information and knowledge, which may include:
  - Lack of (or limited adherence to) data quality standards
  - Unwillingness to share information, for example due to limited intellectual property rights or inter-agency competitiveness
  - Limited internet connectivity or technological expertise and resources
  - Language
- Generation of national and regional baseline datasets on biodiversity and ecosystem services, and establishment of national and regional long-term monitoring programs of biodiversity and ecosystem services necessary for underpinning assessments.

**Enhance multi-stakeholder engagement**

- Capacity must be built to ensure the engagement of all relevant stakeholders in IPBES activities and the science-policy interface.
- These stakeholders include Governments, the private sector, international and intergovernmental organizations, non-government organizations, civil society organizations, decision makers at all levels of society, natural and social scientists, indigenous communities and the general public.
- More opportunities must be created for participatory decision-making involving multiple stakeholders at the science-policy interface.
- In particular the participation of indigenous communities (discussed below) and the private sector must be ensured. The latter could provide valuable sources of funding and expertise as well as political and economic leverage for the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- There is also a need to increase public awareness and understanding of biodiversity, ecosystem services and the threats they face through effective communication and education.

**Develop capacity to bring together science with local knowledge**

- There is an urgent need for developing people's skills to understand how to combine modern science with local and indigenous knowledge as a basis for assessing the current status of biodiversity and ecosystem services, and developing change scenarios.

- There is a need for training/mentoring indigenous people and local communities so that they could engage more effectively, as well as a need to train scientists and policymakers to work more effectively with local communities.
- An increased focus on capacity building at the local level with respect to indigenous and local knowledge and the manner in which it is used will help both to empower local and traditional communities and knowledge systems, and to increase their contribution.

#### **Improve capacity for trans-disciplinary and trans-sectoral communication and collaboration**

- A key challenge limiting knowledge generation and the use of science in policymaking is ineffective communication among practitioners of all disciplines and policymakers. This reflects limited collaboration amongst natural and social scientists as well as the 'language barrier' between these practitioners and policymakers.
- There is a need to build capacity for the translation of scientific and social assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services into a format easily understood by policymakers. This would involve strengthening the ability of scientists to use the language of policymakers and building the capacity of policymakers to understand and use this knowledge.
- More effective communication of the issues facing the environment and the importance of conserving biodiversity could raise awareness and strengthen political will to tackle these issues.
- These communication challenges are connected with the need to enhance coordination and collaboration among practitioners as well as between practitioners and policymakers.
- Limited collaboration prevents feedback or monitoring of progress on policymaking. It also prevents streamlining scientific research with policy goals to ensure that policies can be supported with appropriate data and that scientific research is policy-relevant.
- These issues are connected to the need to enhance access and sharing of data and information on biodiversity and ecosystem services among practitioners.

#### **Ensure the necessary human resource and skills base**

- There is a need for a stronger cadre of professionals working at the science-policy interface. These professionals include natural and social scientists, decision makers at all levels of society and other relevant practitioners.
- Capacity must be built to ensure that decision makers at all levels of society can understand and use relevant scientific and indigenous knowledge for policymaking.
- Capacity must be built to ensure a sufficient level of manpower (both the number of people and the spread of skills) for interdisciplinary research, monitoring, and communication.
- There is need for training in specific areas including: georeferencing, bioinformatics, taxonomy, setting up scientific collections, natural resource accounting.
- Furthermore, capacity must be built to implement specific MEAs (Multilateral Environmental Agreements).

#### **Enhance the ability to participate effectively in IPBES assessments**

- Full and effective participation by developing countries in IPBES assessments must be guaranteed to ensure appropriate balance, and that all Members have the opportunity to input to and benefit from assessment processes
- Monitoring balance in participation will ensure the effective participation by developing countries in IPBES assessments.

## Annex 4: Capacity Building Mechanisms

*The following key capacity building mechanisms have been identified and are described in more detail below:*

### PROMOTING ASSESSMENTS, AND INCREASING FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

- Promoting national and regional assessments
- Matchmaking between those who have resources, and those who need them
- Developing tools to assist the translation of scientific and indigenous knowledge into policy
- Establishing fellowship and mentoring programmes

### BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS AND INCREASING COLLABORATION

- Developing key partnerships and promoting the role of supporting organizations
- Ensuring a coordinated approach amongst organizations supporting capacity building
- Supporting development, and using existing experience, of national and regional centres of excellence
- Promoting and supporting universities and research institutions
- Encouraging increased use of multi-stakeholder dialogues

### BUILDING NETWORKS AND APPROACHES FOR SHARING DATA, INFORMATION AND LESSONS LEARNED

- Promoting and supporting communities of practice and knowledge networks
- Promoting and supporting data and information networks, and web portals
- Developing and implementing effective communication strategies at all levels
- Developing a network of IPBES focal points

### ONGOING EVALUATION OF CAPACITY NEEDS, AND ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS IN ADDRESSING THEM

- Identifying capacity building needs and opportunities as part of scoping processes
- Continued consultation on capacity building needs and opportunities
- National self-assessment of capacity building needs
- Periodic evaluation of capacity building efforts

In considering these mechanisms and their application it is essential to also consider the importance of working in appropriate languages, and differences in the ability to access information technology.

### PROMOTING ASSESSMENTS, AND INCREASING FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

#### **Promoting national and regional assessments**

- There is a need to promote and/or facilitate national and regional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- IPBES should support the building of capacity necessary for carrying out and using the results of such assessments.

#### **Matchmaking between those who have resources, and those who need them**

- Mechanisms must be developed to facilitate the mobilization of financial and technical resources for all capacity building activities.
- In particular, there is a need to develop some form of 'matchmaking' service that would bring together those who have resources (financial or technical) with those that need them.

- A decision within the Busan outcome<sup>14</sup> and the agreed functions of the platform<sup>15</sup> also state that IPBES will provide a forum for catalyzing funding for capacity building.
- These mechanisms would promote cooperation between developed and developing countries since developed countries could provide financial, technical or technological support to developing countries. South-South cooperation must also be encouraged.

#### **Developing tools to assist the translation of scientific and indigenous knowledge into policy**

- Improving communication between practitioners (particularly scientists and indigenous communities) and policymakers is crucial for enhancing the use of science and indigenous knowledge in policymaking.
- Tools are needed to bring together indigenous and scientific knowledge of biodiversity and ecosystem services and to facilitate collaboration between natural and social scientists.
- Tools are needed to translate this knowledge of biodiversity and ecosystem services into a format easily understood by policymakers.

#### **Establishing fellowship and mentoring programmes**

- The establishment of fellowship programmes would allow young professionals from developing countries to work alongside professionals from elsewhere, in order to increase their own experience. These professionals could include not only natural and social scientists but also decision makers and practitioners involved in policymaking.
- An active mentoring programme could also be developed in order to provide the fellows the opportunity for continued networking and support.
- These mechanisms would provide opportunities for hands-on training of experts who can disseminate the lessons learned in their respective countries and educate the next generation of experts. This would help bridge language barriers which often limit collaboration among professionals of different nations and facilitate the involvement of developing country experts in assessments, research and the development of policy relevant tools and methodologies.

### **BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS AND INCREASING COLLABORATION**

#### **Developing key partnerships and promoting the role of supporting organizations**

- There is a need to identify opportunities for developing key partnerships that will help IPBES to meet its commitments and to promote the work of relevant organizations at all levels that support capacity building at the science-policy interface.
- These organizations include United Nations bodies, MEAs and other international, regional, national and local organizations and initiatives.
- This would include strategic partnerships with relevant international initiatives such as: GBIF; the Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network (GEOBON); the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership (BIP); and the Sub-Global Assessment Network.
- There could also be value in cooperating with global and regional institutions specializing in education and training in relevant disciplines.
- In addition, IPBES must strengthen its relations with its UN partners (FAO, UNEP, UNDP and UNESCO) since they can play a key role in raising the awareness of relevant national ministries about the IPBES work programme.

<sup>14</sup> UNEP/IPBES/3/3 *Report of the third ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting on an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services.*

<sup>15</sup> UNEP/IPBES.M/2/9 *Report of the second session of the plenary meeting to determine modalities and institutional arrangements for an intergovernmental science policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services.*

**Ensuring a coordinated approach amongst organizations supporting capacity building**

- IPBES should coordinate closely with other institutions and processes that already support capacity building (whether financially or technically) so as to ensure that IPBES builds on and strengthens existing efforts.
- IPBES could invite such institutions and processes to share their views on how such coordination might best be achieved.
- IPBES could review regional coordination activities to help identify opportunities, best practices and gaps.
- Consideration might be given to establishing an informal working group amongst the GEF implementing and executing agencies with the aim of promoting best practice amongst the activities that they oversee (something that could potentially be communicated to those preparing the GEF-6 focal area strategy document).
- There is a need to create synergies among international agendas, visions and mandates to streamline policies relevant to biodiversity and ecosystem services.

**Supporting development, and using existing experience, of national and regional centres of excellence**

- National institutions that provide access to the science base necessary for informing policy and decision making have proved valuable in improving the science-policy interface. IPBES could promote the establishment of such Centres elsewhere and strengthen existing national coordinating institutions. Developing countries that have already established strong programmes are also well placed to support other developing countries in developing such institutions.
- The experience of existing national centres and initiatives could support training, workshops and peer-to-peer exchanges in a wide range of activities relating to the capture, management and use of data and information concerning biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- There is a need to enhance collaboration among national centres at the regional level in order to improve data capture, management and sharing.
- Mentoring programmes aimed at leveraging and enhancing capacity by promoting partnerships between different national nodes could be established to share expertise and experience.
- A number of these centres of excellence are already working closely with MEA secretariats on a number of levels (for example as scientific focal points or authorities).

**Promoting and supporting universities and research institutions**

- There is a need to promote and support universities and research institutions in applied research to address specific problems, and for developing human capacity in the field of biodiversity informatics and the capture, management and use of data and information.
- This could be achieved by working with national research councils and other interested organizations to support the funding of studentships and research programmes linked to the IPBES work programme, and to national science-policy interfaces.
- Support must be given to encourage the creation of networks, improve collaboration and information sharing among universities and research institutions.

**Encouraging increased use of multi-stakeholder dialogues**

- Multi-stakeholder dialogues are valuable for improving the capacity of local or national experts to tackle issues in an interdisciplinary setting, identify national needs and promote participatory decision making.
- In particular increased use of multi-stakeholder dialogues is consistent with the need to enhance the engagement of the private sector and indigenous communities in IPBES activities.
- IPBES could collect information on such initiatives and promote them, possibly also giving more explicit recognition to key knowledge exchange platforms.
- National committees with multi-stakeholder representation could be developed to support IPBES focal points.

## **BUILDING NETWORKS AND APPROACHES FOR SHARING DATA, INFORMATION AND LESSONS LEARNED**

### **Promoting and supporting communities of practice and knowledge networks**

- There is a need to support increased networking and communities of practice.
- Communities of practice such as the Sub-Global Assessment network can support the sharing of experience, mentoring, and training, and promote collaboration on the development and use of policy support tools and methodologies.
- IPBES could also work with communities of practice and knowledge exchange platforms to develop, use and share specific tools and methodologies to carry out assessments at national and sub-national levels.
- Some of the MEAs have experience of this sort of approach, such as building collaboration between CBD Clearing House Mechanism focal points under the CBD, or the network of CITES authorities which IPBES could build on.

### **Promoting and supporting data and information networks, and web portals**

- The development and implementation of information networks is essential for facilitating the sharing of data and information, and, where appropriate, its repatriation.
- IPBES could also promote improved access to online journals (such as through OARE, Online Access to Research in the Environment, hosted by UNEP), virtual libraries and major grey literature collections.
- In addition, IPBES could work with other relevant international initiatives to explore means of enhancing capacity in biodiversity data management and sharing and in providing improved access to knowledge.
- In addition, IPBES could also consider developing or supporting the development of:
  - a clearing house mechanism of some form to facilitate the exchange of data and information among research institutions, government ministries and other practitioners
  - a searchable ‘network of networks’ of scientists, research groups and institutions, local community projects and decision makers at all levels of society to facilitate engagement and communication among stakeholders
  - a moderated web portal to support capacity building through the sharing of information and experience of scientists, policymakers and practitioners (noting that UNDP has already begun development of a BES-Net web portal)
- IPBES could also utilize and build on existing online services such as the CITES Virtual College,<sup>16</sup> and the efforts being made by multiple MEAs with the support of UNEP to ensure improved access to data, information and knowledge held by MEA secretariats under the MEA Information and Knowledge Management initiative.<sup>17</sup>

### **Developing and implementing effective communication strategies at all levels**

- Effective communication of IPBES objectives and activities to the many different stakeholders across society using the most appropriate means is essential.
- Formats, mechanisms and the language used would vary significantly, depending on the target audience.
- IPBES products could also be included in formal education systems.

### **Developing a network of IPBES focal points**

- A network of IPBES focal points could be developed to improve coordination and access to technical support. These focal points would presumably also be liaison points for the IPBES Secretariat on

<sup>16</sup> See <https://eva.unia.es/cites/>.

<sup>17</sup> See [www.informea.org](http://www.informea.org).

capacity building issues, and at the national level would also interact with the national focal points for the different MEAs.

- Mechanisms should be developed to enhance information dissemination from IPBES focal points and to increase information input to the focal points from a variety of stakeholders. This could occur through the creation of national IPBES committees with representation of a broad range of stakeholders.

## **ONGOING EVALUATION OF CAPACITY NEEDS, AND ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS IN MEETING THEM**

### **Identifying capacity building needs and opportunities as part of scoping processes**

- There is a need to consider how capacity building can be effectively addressed within the scoping of IPBES deliverables.
- The scoping of each assessment, policy support tool and knowledge generation deliverable could include identification of generic capacity building needs and existing capacities and resources.
- Capacity building could also be considered in the context of assessment of policy relevant tools and methodologies and how they are used.

### **Continued consultation on capacity building needs and opportunities**

- It could be valuable to ensure continued consultation on capacity building needs and opportunities in the context of IPBES. The informal consultation in Kuala Lumpur was a successful example of such meetings and provided an opportunity for discussion of capacity building needs and mechanisms resulting in the output of this document.
- Regional or national meetings comprising a balanced group of stakeholders could be convened to discuss ways of identifying capacity building needs, bottlenecks, existing capacities and the tools, networks and processes that would best support ways of addressing such needs.
- The findings of such meetings would help to support discussion on the work programme with respect to capacity building, and assist identification of priority needs which would provide useful input to IPBES focal points.
- IPBES must consider how frequently and by what methods it would continue to review capacity building needs, activities and partnerships.

### **National self-assessment of capacity building needs**

- As discussed during the information consultation in Kuala Lumpur, IPBES could establish a process for national self-assessment of capacity building needs.
- If carried out in a systematic manner, national self-assessments could be used as a basis for both prioritizing needs, and for reviewing progress in meeting priority needs.

### **Periodic evaluation of capacity building efforts**

- The success of capacity building measures should be monitored through ongoing evaluation of tangible deliverables and how effectively skills and technologies are being applied.
- This would include implementing a monitoring process to ensure that commitments on balanced participation are being met.



## Annex 5: Draft Terms of Reference for the Task Force on Knowledge and Data

### Summary

This task force is established to directly support implementation of the work programme with respect to improving access to data, information and knowledge. It comprises interested Bureau and MEP members, and representatives of organizations representing data and knowledge communities. The Task Force would be established for the life of the current work programme, and would consider knowledge and data issues relevant to the IPBES work programme at all levels (sub-national to global).

### Membership of the Task Force

The Task Force would comprise:

- a) Sufficient Bureau and MEP members to ensure the appropriate representation of regions, disciplines and knowledge systems.
- b) Representatives of relevant organizations, initiatives and networks, selected by the Bureau in consultation with the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel based on nominations from member States and observers.

Individual experts may also be invited to participate in the Task Force as resource persons, at the discretion of the Task Force Chair and following consultation with the Bureau.

### Responsibilities of the Task Force

The task force would support implementation of the work programme through carrying out the following activities:

- a) Identify the best means of addressing the data and information needs identified through IPBES scoping and assessment, and supporting their implementation.
- b) Identify opportunities for increasing access to existing data, information and knowledge so that it is available for supporting decision making at all levels.
- c) Support the Secretariat in overseeing curation of the data, information and knowledge used in developing IPBES products, so as to ensure its long term availability.
- d) Advise on the indicators and metrics to be used in IPBES products, and on the standards necessary for capture and management of associated data.
- e) Support the Bureau and MEP in reviewing the knowledge needs and gaps identified through IPBES scoping processes and assessments, and in convening dialogues and undertaking other activities to help address those needs.
- f) Support the Bureau and MEP in identifying effective means for IPBES to draw on different knowledge systems through establishment of dialogues at appropriate levels, preparation of case studies and guidance, and development of networks of experts and knowledge holders.

In carrying out its work the task force would also:

- g) Ensure that all of the above activities draw effectively on existing experience, and complement and build on existing initiatives on biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- h) Advise on strategic partnerships that help deliver improved access to data, information and knowledge, and help to facilitate and coordinate the support that strategic partners provide.
- i) Promote and facilitate other activities that have the same effect.

### Modus operandi

The task force would meet both physically and virtually as necessary to address an agenda prepared by the Bureau and MEP with the support of the Secretariat. Technical support for the work of the task force would be provided either by the Secretariat itself or by a technical support unit established for the purpose reporting to the Secretariat. In order to ensure continuity and close links to the work of

the Bureau and MEP, identified Bureau and MEP members would be appointed to work on the Task Force. The task force would be chaired by one or more members of the Bureau.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> During the informal consultation there were a number of participants who thought that task forces should have an independent chair, although it was recognised that this could be a member of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel. As this view is not consistent with the draft work programme, this is included here as a footnote.

## Annex 6: Draft Terms of Reference for the Task Force on Capacity Building

### Summary

This task force is established to directly support implementation of the work programme with respect to capacity building. It comprises interested Bureau and MEP members, and representatives of organizations supporting capacity development. It would consider capacity building relevant to the IPBES work programme at all levels (sub-national to global).

### Membership of the Task Force

The Task Force would comprise:

- c) Sufficient Bureau and MEP members to ensure the appropriate representation of regions and necessary areas of expertise.
- d) Representatives of relevant organizations, initiatives and networks, selected by the Bureau in consultation with the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel based on nominations from member States and observers.

Individual experts may also be invited to participate in the Task Force as resource persons, at the discretion of the Task Force Chair and following consultation with the Bureau.

### Responsibilities of the Task Force<sup>19</sup>

The task force would support implementation of the work programme through carrying out the following activities:

- a) Propose and support implementation of a systematic approach for:
  - o identifying and reviewing existing capacity building needs and opportunities
  - o prioritizing identified capacity building needs
  - o identifying associated financing gaps and potential sources of funding
- b) Consider the potential value of establishing a process for systematic national self-assessment of capacity needs in the context of IPBES, working with the Secretariat to implement it once agreed.
- c) Support the Bureau and Secretariat in organizing the forum with conventional and potential sources of funding, including advice on:
  - o the agenda and format of the meeting
  - o participation in the meeting
  - o how identified capacity building needs and opportunities should be presented
- d) Propose means that could be developed for effectively integrating identified capacity building needs into the policies and programmes of development assistance processes, also seeking and taking advice from the forum as appropriate.
- e) Advise the Bureau and Secretariat on implementation of a 'matchmaking' facility to help match available technical and financial resources with priority capacity building needs, also seeking and taking advice from the forum as appropriate.

In carrying out its work the task force would also:

- f) Ensure that all of the above activities draw effectively on existing experience, and complement and build on existing initiatives on biodiversity and ecosystem services.

<sup>19</sup> During the informal consultation there were a number of participants who thought that this task force should have a shorter life (3-6 months), and primarily focus on the four issues identified below. As this is not consistent with the draft work programme, this view is included here as a footnote rather than in the text.

- a) Identifying and prioritizing capacity building needs
- b) Delivering capacity building
- c) Monitoring and evaluating delivery of capacity building
- d) Agree a methodology for monitoring and evaluation delivery of capacity building

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- g) Advise on strategic partnerships that help deliver improved access to data, information and knowledge, and promote and facilitate other activities that have the same effect.
  - h) Encourage the direct involvement of its members and their organizations, and other relevant organizations in capacity building activities that address priority needs agreed by the Plenary.

### Modus operandi

The task force would meet both physically and virtually as necessary to address an agenda prepared by the Bureau with the advice of the MEP and the support of the Secretariat. Technical support for the work of the task force would be provided either by the Secretariat itself or by a technical support unit established for the purpose reporting to the Secretariat. In order to ensure continuity and close links to the work of the Bureau and MEP, identified Bureau and MEP members would be appointed to work on the Task Force. The task force would be chaired by one or more members of the Bureau.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> During the informal consultation there were a number of participants who thought that task forces should have an independent chair, although it was recognised that this could be a member of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel. As this view is not consistent with the draft work programme, this is included here as a footnote.