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|  | | **Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services** | | | | | Distr.: General 16 January 2017  English only | |

Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy

Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

Fifth session

Bonn, Germany, 7–10 March 2017

Item 5 of the provisional agenda[[1]](#footnote-1)\*

Report of the Executive Secretary on the implementation   
of the work programme for the period 2014–2018

Progress report on the implementation of the land degradation and restoration assessment (deliverable 3 (b) (i))

Note by the secretariat

1. In section IV of decision IPBES-3/1, the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services approved the undertaking of a thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration in accordance with the procedures for the preparation of Platform deliverables, as outlined in the scoping report set out in annex VIII to the decision, for consideration at its sixth session.
2. The annex to the present note sets out a report on the composition of the group of experts selected to produce the assessment, and on the progress they have made in that regard. It is presented without formal editing.

Annex

I. Context

1. The overall scope of the land degradation and restoration assessment is to critically evaluate available knowledge: on the extent, causes and processes of land degradation, and the consequences for biodiversity and people; on responses to avoid land degradation and restore degraded lands; on a range of plausible development scenarios and their implications for land degradation and restoration; and on decision support for addressing land degradation problems and restoring degraded land. The assessment encompasses all the terrestrial regions and biomes of the world, recognizing that land degradation drivers and processes can vary in severity within regions and countries as much as between them. The assessment encompasses the full range of human-altered systems, including but not limited to drylands, agricultural and agroforestry systems, savannahs and forests and aquatic systems associated with these areas.
2. The overall objective of the land degradation and restoration assessment is to provide the information and guidance necessary to support stakeholders working at all levels to reduce the negative environmental, social and economic consequences of land degradation and to rehabilitate and restore degraded land to aid the recovery of nature’s benefits to people.

II. Composition of the expert groups performing the land degradation and restoration assessment

A. Dedicated Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP) and Bureau members

1. In accordance with the procedures for the preparation of the Platform’s deliverables (decision IPBES-2/3), the following dedicated MEP and Bureau members are responsible for overseeing the development of this assessment:

* Rashad Zabid Oglu Allahverdiyev (Bureau member)
* Fundisile Goodman Mketeni (Bureau member)
* Günay Erpul (MEP member)
* Yi Huang (MEP member)
* Marie Roué (MEP member)
* Leng Guan Saw (MEP member)

1. The management committee consists of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and Bureau members mentioned above, the co-chairs of the assessment, the staff member of the technical support unit, as well as a representative of the IPBES secretariat. Management committee meetings are held, usually remotely, at regular intervals.

B. Update on additional experts

1. In 2015, the co-chairs, coordinating lead authors and lead authors of the assessment were selected from the original pool of nominations (please see IPBES/4/INF/11). Fellows were also selected, through a separate application process. From early 2016 onwards, review editors were selected following the procedure for filling gaps among groups of experts (annex I to decision   
   IPBES-4/3).
2. Following this procedure, the MEP together with the co-chairs compiled a list of the potential review editors to fill the remaining gaps, taking into account expertise together with regional and gender diversity. The final list of the review editors was put forth for approval by the dedicated MEP and Bureau members of the assessment and the chosen experts were contacted by the technical support unit (TSU) to ensure their availability and interest in undertaking this role. The secretariat subsequently invited the appropriate Government or stakeholder to endorse the nomination of the identified experts.
3. In the process of delivering the first order draft for external expert review (June-July 2016), the MEP and Bureau members have been alerted to the issue of unresponsiveness and inadequate contributions that placed substantial strain on some chapters to deliver quality draft in a timely fashion. In order to address this issue in a consistent, objective and transparent manner, the MEP and Bureau members drafted a policy on unresponsive authors and sub-standard contributions in September 2016. Following its approval by the full MEP and Bureau, the TSU worked closely with the co-chairs and the coordinating lead authors to enforce it. The resulting gaps in expertise were filled following the procedure outlined in annex I to decision IPBES-4/3.
4. An updated list of experts is presented in appendix I to the present annex.

III. Progress towards preparation of the land degradation and restoration report

A. First order draft and external review

1. The first order draft of the assessment report went out for external expert review from 30 May to 18 July 2016. The announcement of the external review was made by the secretariat six weeks in advance and all experts were encouraged to further circulate it to maximize the input of relevant experts. The review comments were subsequently collated by the technical support unit. A total of 2277 comments were submitted by 85 external reviewers, of which two were from scientific bodies and two from governments. All comments were distributed to the authors by the end of July 2016. This allowed the coordinating lead authors and the review editors to prepare for to the second author meeting, held jointly with the four regional assessments.

B. Joint second author meeting

1. The joint second author meeting for the land degradation and restoration assessment together with the four regional assessments was held from 22 to 26 August 2016 in Bonn, Germany. It was attended by the co-chairs, coordinating lead authors, liaison experts, and review editors of the five assessments as well as members of the IPBES task forces, MEP, Bureau, and secretariat including the technical support units.
2. During the meeting, the experts had the opportunity to meet with their respective review editors for the first time and to address the comments from the external review process in order to improve the content of their chapters. The experts also had the chance to further elaborate the key messages within their chapter-specific groups and to begin working toward the summary for policymakers within the overall assessment group.
3. Common concepts and procedures under development were discussed with all assessment teams (e.g. a core set of indicators, terrestrial and aquatic units of analysis, nature’s contributions’ to people framework, and maps to be used for the assessments).
4. To encourage coherence between the assessments, it was decided that the first chapters of the five assessments would use similar text to present common rules and concepts (e.g. the IPBES conceptual framework).
5. The joint second author meeting also provided the land degradation and restoration assessment team with an opportunity to liaise with the four regional assessment teams and to promote coherence among similar chapters. The agenda for the meeting specifically allocated time slots for experts of similar chapters from different assessments to meet and discuss common issues and overall approach to their chapter’s scope. Feedback from the authors indicated that this type of meeting was particularly helpful to harmonize and compare progress, to identify gaps and possible areas of improvements, to discuss potential solutions to common issues, and to define a common strategy to address   
   cross-chapters issues.
6. The discussions between assessment teams highlighted the need to strengthen coordination between the land degradation and restoration assessment on one hand, and the regional assessments on the other hand. In general, a majority of the experts of land degradation involved in the regional assessments were more engaged in their respective regional assessment than in the land degradation and restoration assessment. The lack of opportunity for these experts to also attend the land degradation and restoration author meetings, in addition to the regional author meetings, may partly explain the weakness of this link. The co-chairs of the five assessments agreed on a new scheme whereby five thematic liaison groups were formed to ensure consistency of terminology and of treatment of land degradation and restoration issues through virtual interactions. These thematic groups consist of one expert from each one of the five chapters related to (1) nature’s contributions to people; (2) status and trends; (3) drivers; (4) scenarios and modelling; and (5) policy support from each of the five assessments.

C. Capacity-building workshops

1. In order to support the delivery and quality of the summary for policymakers, a writing workshop is being organized by the capacity building taskforce with the co-chairs and coordinating lead authors of the land degradation and restoration assessment and the four regional assessments in Oslo, Norway from 27 February to 2 March 2017.
2. Further potential capacity building activities for the land degradation and restoration assessment are currently being discussed by the capacity building technical support unit, the secretariat, and the co-chairs.

D. Other workshops of relevance to the land degradation and restoration assessment

1. The expert group on scenarios and models held two workshops for the ongoing assessments. The first workshop took place from 25 to 27 January 2016 in Bilthoven, the Netherlands, and the second, from 15 to 18 November 2016, in Shonan Village, Japan. The objective of these workshops was to support the scenario chapter teams in finding relevant studies about scenarios and models and analyse/synthesize those for the relevant chapters. These meetings also presented pathways for the land degradation and restoration team to inform the regional assessments and the global assessment.
2. Several workshops on the diverse conceptualizations of value have been organized by the core group on values in order to catalyse the use of the IPBES guide on values within the ongoing regional and thematic assessments. The workshops introduced the guide to experts in Africa, the Americas and the Asia-Pacific regions, reflecting on its generic application at the regional and local level. These workshops were supported by SwedBio and hosted or organized by local organizations. While there was no separate values workshop organized for the land degradation and restoration assessment group, at least one expert on land degradation from the four regions was able to attend the relevant regional workshop and report back to their chapter group.

E. Preparation of the second order draft of the assessment report and of the first order draft of the summary for policymakers

1. The second order draft of the assessment report and the first order draft of the summary for policymakers are to be submitted for external review from 1 May 2017 to 26 June 2017.

F. Third author meetings

1. The third author meeting will be held from 17 to 21 July 2017 in Rome, Italy. FAO has generously offered to host this meeting at its headquarters. The aim of this meeting will be to respond to comments from the second external review of the assessment report and the first external review of their summary for policymakers, and to further fine-tune the drafts. Co-chairs, coordinating lead authors, lead authors, review editors and fellows will be invited to attend the meeting, together with the relevant members of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, Bureau, task forces and secretariat.

G. Timeline

1. An updated annotated timeline is provided in appendix II to this annex.

Appendix I: List of experts for the thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration

Abbreviations: CLA (Coordinating Lead Author), LA (Lead Author), LA 2b (Land degradation and restoration assessment expert working as thematic expert within the regional assessment), RE (Review Editor). Fellows were selected through the fellowship programme for capacity building of IPBES.

| *Role* | *Name* | *Affiliation* | *Nominating Country/Organisation* |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Assessment co-chairs | | | |
| Co-chair | Luca Montanarella | European Commission | Food and Agriculture Organisation |
| Co-chair | Robert Scholes | University of the Witwatersrand | South Africa |
| Chapter 1: Benefits to people from avoidance of land degradation and restoration of degraded land | | | |
| CLA | Judith Fisher | Fisher Research Pty Ltd | Australia |
| CLA | Sergius Gandolfi | University of São Paulo | Brazil |
| Co-Chair & LA | Luca Montanarella | European Commission | Food and Agriculture Organisation |
| Co-Chair & LA | Robert Scholes | University of the Witwatersrand | South Africa |
| RE | Oumarou Malam Issa | Institute for Research and Development (IRD) | Niger |
| RE | Pascal Podwojewski | Institute for Research and Development (IRD) | France |
| Chapter 2: Concepts and perceptions of land degradation and restoration | | | |
| CLA | Florent Kohler | Université de Tours | France |
| CLA | Janne Kotiaho | University of Jyväskylä | Finland |
| CLA | Tao Wang | Chinese Academy of Sciences | China |
| LA | Shonil Bhagwat | The Open University | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland |
| LA | Laetitia Navarro | German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv) Halle-Jena-Leipzig | Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network – GEO BON |
| LA | Robin Reid | Colorado State University | United States of America |
| LA | Carlton Roberts | Forestry Division | Trinidad and Tobago |
| LA | Josef Seják | J.E.Purkyne University in Usti nad Labem | Czech Republic |
| Fellow | Maylis Desrousseaux | Lyon 3 University | Environmental law institute - Lyon 3 University |
| RE | Alejandro Leon Stewart | Universidad de Chile | Chile |
| RE | Katalin Török | Centre for Ecological Research | Hungary |
| Chapter 3: Direct and indirect drivers of land degradation and restoration | | | |
| CLA | Nichole Barger | University of Colorado | United States of America |
| CLA | Toby Gardner | Stockholm Environment Institute | Sweden |
| CLA | Mahesh Sankaran | National Centre for Biological Sciences | India |
| LA | Patrick Meyfroidt | Le Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique (FNRS) & Université catholique de Louvain | Belgium |
| LA | Francisco Moreira | Institute of Agronomy | Portugal |
| LA | Tiina Maileena Nieminen | Natural Resources Institute Finland, Luke | Finland |
| LA | Toshiya Okuro | University of Tokyo | Japan |
| LA | Vivek Saxena | Government of Haryana | India |
| LA (2b) | P. C. Abhilash | Banaras Hindu University | India |
| LA (2b) | Linda Broadhurst | Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO) | Australia |
| LA (2b) | Violaine Brochier | Electricité de France, Research and Development | France |
| LA (2b) | Forest Isbell | University of Minnesota | United States of America |
| LA (2b) | Danielson Ramoz Kisanga | University of Dar es Salaam | United Republic of Tanzania |
| LA (2b) | Ricardo Ribeiro Rodrigues | Agriculture School-ESALQ - University of Sao Paulo | Brazil |
| LA (2b) | Alou Adamou Didier Tidjani | Université Abdou Moumouni | Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) |
| Fellow | Marina Monteiro | Universidade Federal de Goiás | Universidade Federal de Goiás |
| Fellow | Matthew Ross | Duke Univeristy | Duke University |
| RE | Valerie Kapos | UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) | United States of America |
| RE | Neil Mckenzie | The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) | Australia |
| Chapter 4: Status and trends of land degradation and restoration and associated changes in biodiversity and ecosystem functions | | | |
| CLA | Stephen Prince | University of Maryland | United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) |
| CLA | Graham Von Maltitz | Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) | United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) |
| CLA | Fengchun Zhang | Chinese Rearch Academy of Environmental Sciences | China |
| LA | Gil Eshel | Soil Erosion Research Station, Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development | Israel |
| LA (2b) | Kenneth Byrne | University of Limerick | Ireland |
| LA (2b) | German Kust | Moscow Lomonosov State University, Soil Science Faculty | Russian Federation |
| LA (2b) | Cristina Martínez Garza | University of the State of Morelos | Mexico |
| LA (2b) | Jean Paul Metzger | University of São Paulo | Brazil |
| LA (2b) | Mongi Sghaier | Institut des Régions Arides | Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) |
| LA (2b) | San Thwin | University of Forestry | Myanmar |
| Fellow | Bernard Nuoleyeng Baatuuwie | University for Development Studies | University for Development Studies, Ghana |
| RE | Chencho Norbu | Department of Forests and Park Services | Bhutan |
| RE | James F. Reynolds | Duke University | United States of America |
| Chapter 5: Land degradation and restoration associated with changes in ecosystem services and functions, and human well-being and good quality of life | | | |
| CLA | Barend Erasmus | University of the Witwatersrand | South Africa |
| CLA | Matthew Potts | University of California, Berkeley | University of California, Berkeley |
| LA | Sebastian Arnhold | Ecological Services, University of Bayreuth | Germany |
| LA | Simone Athayde | Federal University of Tocantins | Brazil |
| LA | Timothy Holland | University of California, Berkley | Canada |
| LA | Eliška Krkoška Lorencová | Global Change Research Centre, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic | Global Change Research Centre, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic |
| LA | Andrew Lowe | University of Adelaide | Terrestrial Ecosystem Research Network |
| LA (2b) | Sandra Verónica Acebey Quiroga | YPFB Petroandina S.A.M. | Bolivia (Plurinational State of) |
| LA (2b) | Peter Elias | Department of Geography, University of Lagos | International Social Science Council (ISSC) |
| LA (2b) | Maria Siobhan Fennessy | Kenyon College | Ramsar Convention Secretariat |
| LA (2b) | Chuluun Togtohyn | National University of Mongolia | Mongolia |
| RE | Edson Gandiwa | Chinhoyi University of Technology, Zimbabwe | Zimbabwe |
| RE | Ephraim Maduhu Nkonya | International Food Policy Research Institute (IFRPI) | IFPRI |
| Chapter 6: Responses to avoid land degradation and restore degraded land | | | |
| CLA | Ram Pandit | University of Western Australia | Nepal |
| CLA | John Parrotta | International Union of Forest Research Organizations | United States of America |
| LA | Emilie Coudel | French agricultural research and international cooperation organization (CIRAD) | France |
| LA | James Harris | Cranfield University | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland |
| LA | Ádám Kertész | Geographical Institute, Research Center for Astronomy and Earth Sciences, Hungarian Academy of Sciences | Hungary |
| LA | Juana L. Mariño De Posada | GUT Sas | Colombia |
| LA | Phumza Ntshotsho | Council for Scientific and Industrial Research | Council for Scientific and Industrial Research |
| LA (2b) | Daniel Vieira | Embrapa (Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation) | Brazil |
| LA (2b) | Yaakov Anker | Samaria and the Jordan Rift R&D center | Samaria and the Jordan Rift R&D center |
| LA (2b) | Cristóbal Félix Diaz Morejón | Environmental Directorate, Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment | Cuba |
| LA (2b) | Noraini Mohd Tamin | University of Malaysia | Malaysia |
| Fellow | Ruishan Chen | Guoqing Shi | Hohai University |
| RE | Susan Galatowitsch | University of Minnesota | Ramsar Convention Secretariat |
| RE | Florencia Montagnini | Yale Climate and Energy Institute | United States of America |
| Chapter 7: Scenarios of land degradation and restoration | | | |
| CLA | Matthew Cantele | International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis | Italy |
| CLA | Michael Obersteiner | International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis | Austria |
| CLA | Ben Ten Brink | PBL-Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency | Netherlands |
| LA | Aletta Bonn | Helmholtz Center for Environmental Research (UFZ) | Germany |
| LA | Jonathan Davies | International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) | IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) |
| LA | Miguel Fernandez Trigoso | German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv) Halle-Jena-Leipzig | Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network – GEO BON |
| LA | Nathanial Matthews | Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) | Canada |
| LA | Joe Morris | Cranfield University | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland |
| LA (2b) | Klaus Kellner | North West University | South Africa |
| LA (2b) | Wilson Ramirez Hernandez | Alexander von Humboldt Institute | Instituto Alexander von Humboldt |
| Fellow | Vanessa Marie Adams | University of Queensland, School of Biological Sciences | University of Queensland, Centre for Biodiversity and Conservation Science |
| RE | Petr Havlik | International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) | Czech Republic |
| RE | Yoshiki Yamagata | National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES) | Japan |
| Chapter 8: Decision support to address land degradation and support restoration of degraded land | | | |
| CLA | Grace Nangendo | Wildlife Conservation Society | Uganda |
| CLA | Louise Willemen | ITC University of Twente, Netherlands | Netherlands |
| LA | Afshin Akhtar Khavari | Griffith University | Australia |
| LA | Nana Bolashvili | Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University | Georgia |
| LA | David Douterlungne | CONACyT and IPICyT | Mexico |
| LA | Ana Mendes | University of Évora | Portugal |
| LA (2b) | Prasanta Kumar Mishra | Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR) | India |
| LA (2b) | Lindsay Stringer | University of Leeds | United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) |
| LA (2b) | Mekuria Argaw Denboba | Addis Ababa University | Ethiopia |
| LA (2b) | Jayne Belnap | U.S. Geological Survey, National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center | United States of America |
| LA (2b) | Ulf Molau | University of Gothenburg | Sweden |
| LA (2b) | Ravishankar Thupalli | Independent International Forest Biodiversity, ABS and Community Development Consultant | India |
| Fellow | Sugeng Budiharta | Indonesian Institute of Sciences | Indonesian Institute of Sciences |
| RE | Pedro Henrique Santin Brancalion | Universidade de São Paulo | Brazil |
| RE | Mary Kathryn Seely | Desert Research Foundation of Namibia | United States of America |

Appendix II: Annotated timeline for the land degradation and restoration assessment

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| *Time frame* | *Actions and institutional arrangements* |
| **2015** | |
| First quarter | Plenary at its third session approves the undertaking of a thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration, asks for offers of in-kind technical support for the assessment and requests the Bureau and the secretariat to establish the necessary institutional arrangements to put in place technical support |
| Second quarter | The panel selects the assessment co-chairs, coordinating lead authors, lead authors and review editors, using the approved selection criteria set out in decision IPBES‑2/3  Meeting of the Management Committee (co-chairs, the technical support unit, and MEP/Bureau members) to select remaining expert team and assign roles (i.e., coordinating lead authors, lead authors and review editors) |
| Third quarter | First author meeting, including co-chairs, coordinating lead authors, liaison experts, lead authors, and fellows (Bonn, Germany) |
| Fourth quarter | Elaboration of zero order draft by the experts |
| **2016** | |
| First / early second quarter | Internal reviews and continuation of the preparation of the draft toward the First Order Draft by experts |
| Second quarter | Parallel First Order Draft review by experts of all four regional/subregional assessments and the land degradation and restoration assessment |
| Third quarter | Joint second author meeting between the experts of the regional/subregional assessments and the land degradation and restoration assessment (including co-chairs, coordinating lead authors, liaison experts, and review editors) |
| Third/ Fourth quarter | Second drafts of chapters and first draft of summary for policymakers in preparation towards the Second Order Draft review by Governments and experts |
| **2017** | |
| First quarter/ early  Second quarter | Internal reviews and continuation of the preparation of the second drafts of chapters and first draft of summary for policymakers towards the Second Order Draft review by Governments and experts |
| Second quarter | Parallel second review by governments and experts of Second Order Draft and first draft of summary for policymakers of all four regional/subregional assessments and the land degradation and restoration assessment |
| Third quarter | Third author meeting, including co-chairs, coordinating lead authors, liaison experts, lead authors, young fellows, and review editors |
| Fourth quarter | Final text changes to the assessment and the summary for policymakers |
| **2018** | |
| First quarter | Translation of the summary for policymakers into the six official languages of the United Nations  Submission of the assessment, including the translated summary for policymakers, to Governments for final review prior to Plenary |
| Second quarter | Presentation of the summary for policymakers (for approval) and of the technical report (for acceptance) to the sixth session of the Plenary |
|  | Outreach and communication |

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1. \* IPBES/5/1/Rev.1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)