



Distr.: General  
29 November 2013

English only



## United Nations Environment Programme

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

Antalya, Turkey, 9–14 December 2013

Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda\*

**Initial work programme of the Platform:  
work programme 2014–2018**

### **Establishing institutional arrangements in support of the draft work programme 2014–2018**

#### **Note by the secretariat**

1. In its decision IPBES/1/2, the Plenary requested the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau of the Platform to develop a draft work programme for 2014–2018 with a sequenced and prioritized set of objectives, deliverables, actions and milestones for advancing the four functions of the Platform (assessment, knowledge generation, policy support and capacity-building) at relevant scales. It further requested the secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau, to provide cost estimates for implementation of the revised draft work programme 2014–2018, also taking into account the proposed institutional arrangements.
2. Accordingly, the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau, with support from the secretariat, prepared the draft work programme for the period 2014–2018 (IPBES/2/2) and modalities for implementing the deliverables of the work programme (IPBES/2/2/Add.1).
3. The annex to the present note provides additional information on establishing institutional arrangements in support of the draft work programme for the period 2014–2018, in particular with regard to the role of the staff of the secretariat, as agreed in the initial budget for the Platform for 2013 (see decision IPBES/1/5), and options for the provision of additional technical support that will be required for implementation of the work programme. The annex is presented without formal editing.

## Annex

### Establishing institutional arrangements in support of the draft work programme 2014–2018

#### A) Responsibilities and capacities of the secretariat to provide technical support to work programme implementation

1. As outlined in the agreement on the institutional arrangement of the Platform (UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9) the secretariat is foreseen to be undertaking administrative functions to support the operations of the Platform, and technical support functions in relation to the implementation of the Platform's work programme.
2. In accordance to the respective responsibilities the secretariat staff will be providing administrative and technical support functions to help to ensure the implementation of the Platform's work programme, including through the following anticipated activities:
  - a. Guidance and support to the preparation of the Platform's work programme and budget, including by liaising and working with the Bureau and MEP;
  - b. Planning and organization for implementation of the Platform's work programme as approved by the Plenary, including the preparation of the terms of references and legal instruments needed for the implementation of the Platform's work programme, such as for potential technical support units and strategic partnerships,
  - c. Preparation of budgets and monitoring of expenditures, including review and analysis of data with respect to the finalization of cost estimates and budget proposals, the provision of support to the elaboration of resource requirements for budget submissions and to IPBES Plenary and Bureau in their budget review, and monitoring of budget implementation and expenditures to ensure that they remain within authorized levels;
  - d. Support to overall coordination of the implementation of the work programme, including liaising and working with the MEP and Bureau and any other subsidiary bodies established by the Plenary, overseeing the provision of technical support to working groups or other structures established for the implementation of the IPBES work programme, coordination of work with other organizations of the United Nation System as appropriate, monitoring of overall implementation of the work programme and of individual deliverables and work of the subsidiary bodies, organizing and preparing written outputs, e.g. draft background papers and analysis, providing substantive backstopping to consultative and other meetings, facilitating training workshops, seminars, and expert workshops as requested by the Plenary;
  - e. Organization and preparation of the Plenary sessions, including liaison and support to the Bureau and MEP (and other potential subsidiary bodies), organization and preparation of the Bureau and MEP meetings, liaison with IPBES members, and other organizations of the United Nation System and stakeholders as appropriate, preparation of briefing notes, reports and other documentation on the Platform's related activities;
  - f. Support to the development and implementation of the communication strategy and outreach activities of the Platform, including by undertaking activities to promote media coverage for IPBES, priority issues and/or major events; producing or overseeing production of information communications products on IPBES and overall responsibility for the management and maintenance of the IPBES website, and organizing stakeholder and outreach events;

- g. Support to the development and implementation of the stakeholder engagement strategy, including by initiating and sustaining professional relationships with key stakeholders relevant to the Platform; supporting stakeholder participation in the Platform's meetings; evaluating results and impact of the Platform's communication and outreach activities and stakeholder engagement and reporting on progress;
  - h. Support the monitoring and evaluation of the Platform's efficiency and effectiveness, including by evaluating results and impact of the Platform's communication and outreach activities and stakeholder engagement and reporting on progress;
  - i. Management of secretariat staff, including supervising and providing guidance to staff in the secretariat and any distributed technical support functions working on the IPBES work programme
3. Following decision IPBES/1/5 on an initial budget for 2013 the proposed financial and budgetary arrangements for the Platform presented in document IPBES/2/5 suggest the following secretariat staff for the period of the work programme 2014-2018:
- a. Head of Secretariat (D-1) with responsibilities including the overall management of the Platform's secretariat, the trust fund, and the technical support functions as well as activities undertaken by the secretariat and coordination of work with other organizations of the United Nation System as appropriate;
  - b. Programme Officer (P-4) with responsibilities including the support to the development and implementation of the communication and stakeholder engagement strategies, and acting as focal point for communications and stakeholder engagement within the Platform's Secretariat;
  - c. Programme Officer (P-4, seconded by UNEP) with responsibilities including the support to the MEP and Bureau with the overall coordination and monitoring of the Platform's work programme, overseeing the provision of technical support to structures established for the implementation of the Platform's work programme, as well as providing substantive support to the implementation of the Platform's work programme;
  - d. Programme Officer (P-3) for Administration and Finance with responsibilities including the review and analysis of data with respect to the finalization of cost estimates and budget proposals, monitoring budget implementation and highlighting the need for reallocation of funds when necessary, and ensuring relevant mandates are accurately translated into programme budgets.
  - e. Programme Officer (P-3) with responsibilities including the support to the overall coordination and delivery of the Platform's work programme, providing technical support to specific deliverables, supporting the provision of substantive backstopping and to monitoring and evaluation work of the Platform;
  - f. Associate Administrative Programme Officer(P-2) with responsibilities including the provision of administrative support to the overall coordination of the IPBES work programme and to the organization of the Platform's meetings as well as to the organization of expert workshops, as well as support to the preparation of related documents/reports;
  - g. Administrative Support Staff (G-6) with responsibilities including initiating, reviewing, processing and following-up on actions related to the administration of the Secretariat's human resource activities, providing administrative support to the Secretary in performing their functions as head of the Platform's Secretariat, as well as performing other related administrative duties, as required;
  - h. Administrative Support Staff (G-5) with responsibilities including assisting in the coordination and monitoring of Platform's programme/project planning, preparation, review and approval work, and serving as IPBES focal point for administrative coordination of programme/project implementation activities;

- i. Administrative Support Staff (G-5) with responsibilities including to assist in the development and implementation of the Platform's communication and engagement strategy and to support their implementation, as well as to provide general office assistance.

4. The secretariat responsibilities above will support implementation of the work programme in both direct and indirect ways. The secretariat's capacity to provide explicit technical support for the implementation of the work programme is foreseen to be around 50% of the P4 programme officer (3 c above) in addition to their function on the overall coordination of the work programme, 80% of the programme officer supporting overall coordination and delivery of the work programme (3 e above), and around a 50% of the associate administrative programme officer (3f above) providing administrative support to the overall coordination of the Platform's work programme.

## **B) Additional technical support required for work programme implementation**

### **I. Technical support needs**

5. The following synthesis of technical support needs is based on the information provided in the draft IPBES Work Programme 2014-2018 submitted to IPBES-2 for consideration. For the purposes of this synthesis technical support is taken to mean *a dedicated team (or individual) that is providing support to subsidiary bodies, expert groups and the like in implementing the IPBES work programme*. The key word in this definition is "dedicated", meaning that the team has clearly defined roles and responsibilities in relation to supporting the IPBES work programme deliverables to which they are committed.

6. In the section on work programme structure and means of delivery, the Draft IPBES Work Programme 2014-2018 identifies a number of key components of possible institutional arrangements for the delivery of the work programme. Three of these are directly relevant to providing technical support, in summary:<sup>1</sup>

- a. The Secretariat has a defined set of administrative functions, but additionally it can be tasked by the Plenary with technical functions to support implementation of the work programme<sup>2</sup>.
- b. In a similar manner, consideration could be given to the establishment of dedicated technical support units under the oversight of the Secretariat to coordinate and administer specific activities of expert groups, networks etc. Actual functions would vary depending on activities being undertaken by the body being supported. The IPCC runs under such a distributed model for technical support to its assessment working groups.
- c. One possible mechanism for managing technical support may be through strategic partnerships which aim to use the expertise and experience of other organizations where this is relevant to supporting delivery of the work programme, in anticipation that this will provide a cost-effective approach if implemented in an appropriate manner.

7. The Draft Work Programme 2014-2018 includes 15 deliverables, and for each of these provides some observations of potential means of implementation including technical support. Information from these descriptions is summarized in table 1. More detail is available in the original document (IPBES/2/2/Add.1).

---

<sup>1</sup> The following four subparagraphs are summaries based on the Draft IPBES Work Programme 2014-2018

<sup>2</sup> Defined in paragraphs 19 and 20 of Appendix I to the resolution establishing IPBES (UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9)

**Table 1: Technical support needs by deliverable as suggested in work programme**

#	Deliverable	Technical Support	Duration	HR needs
1 a)	Priority capacity-building-needs to implement the Platform work programme are matched with resources through catalysing financial and in-kind support	Potentially involving technical support from the Secretariat, and also a technical support unit working with regional centres of excellence, depending which activities are supported.	2014-2018	2 FTEs
1 b)	Capacities needed to implement the Platform work programme are developed with support provided by network on capacity-building	Technical support provided to 1 a) is also responsible to cover technical support needed for 1 b)	2014-2015	
1 c)	Procedures and approaches for working with indigenous and local knowledge systems	Potentially involving technical support from the Secretariat and also from partner organizations.	2014-2015	1.5
1 d)	Priority knowledge and data needs for policy-making addressed through catalysing efforts to generate new knowledge and networking	Potentially involving technical support from the Secretariat, and also a technical support unit working with regional centres of excellence, depending which activities are supported.	2014-2018	2
2 a)	Guide on production and integration of assessments from and across all scales	It is assumed that any necessary technical support would be provided by the Secretariat working with an existing community of practice.	2014	-
2 b)	Regional/Subregional assessments on biodiversity and ecosystem services	Potential technical support could come from one or more of the following: Secretariat; fellowships; technical support unit; or strategic partnership with an appropriately qualified organization(s).	2015-2016	10
2 c)	Global assessment on biodiversity and ecosystem services	Potential technical support could come from one or more of the following: Secretariat; fellowships; technical support unit; or strategic partnership with an appropriately qualified organization(s).	2016-2018	3
3 a)	Fast-track thematic assessment on pollination and food production	Potential technical support could come from one or more of the following: Secretariat; fellowships; technical support unit; or strategic partnership with an appropriately qualified organization(s).	2014	1
3 b)	Thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration and/or Thematic assessment on invasive alien species	Potential technical support could come from one or more of the following: Secretariat; fellowships; technical support unit; or strategic partnership with an appropriately qualified organization(s).	2014-2015	1 or 2

#	Deliverable	Technical Support	Duration	HR needs
3 c)	Policy support tools and methodologies for scenarios analysis and modelling	Potential technical support could come from one or more of the following: Secretariat; fellowships; technical support unit; or strategic partnership with an appropriately qualified organization(s).	2014-2016	1
3 d)	Policy support tools and methodologies regarding value, valuation and accounting	Potential technical support could come from one or more of the following: Secretariat; fellowships; technical support unit; or strategic partnership with an appropriately qualified organization(s).	2014-2016	1
4 a)	Catalogue of relevant assessments	It is assumed that any necessary technical support would be provided by the Secretariat or partner organization	2014-2018	0.2
4 b)	Catalogue of accessible policy support tools	It is assumed that any necessary technical support would be provided by the Secretariat or partner organization	2014-2018	0.2
4 c)	Set of communication, outreach and engagement products and processes	It is assumed that any necessary technical support would be provided by the Secretariat	2014-2018	-
4 d)	Reviews of effectiveness of programme implementation	It is assumed that any necessary technical support would be provided by the Secretariat	2014-2018	-

## II. Key considerations in addressing technical support needs

8. The following issues are suggested for consideration when identifying options for technical support.

- a. Degree of control/oversight: It is not essential or necessarily cost-effective for all technical support to be provided by the IPBES Secretariat centrally. However for technical support provided beyond the Secretariat it is essential to ensure that those providing support are overseen by the Secretariat, and by any relevant IPBES subsidiary body / expert group. This is important for ensuring accountability, and a coordinated and consistent approach, and might for example include agreements of accountability with the IPBES secretariat.
- b. Location: The location has implications for cost, but also has a range of other implications including as a means of ensuring an efficient and balanced approach to working with regions, and the opportunity of co-locating with appropriately experienced organizations that could provide additional in kind support. The most apparent options for the location of technical support are:
  - i. IPBES Secretariat in Bonn, Germany
  - ii. Other UN offices within the regions and/or with appropriate technical expertise
  - iii. Organizations with appropriate expertise located within the regions
  - iv. Organizations with appropriate thematic expertise

- c. Source of resources: Any technical support is going to require the allocation of dedicated resources, from one or more of the following:
- the IPBES budget;
  - additional voluntary financial contributions to IPBES or directly to those providing technical support; and/or
  - in-kind contributions from the organization providing the support.
- The draft financial procedures (IPBES/1/6) state in Rule 5 that contributions should not be earmarked for specific activities. Rule 6 states that direct support for specific activities of the Platform's work programme could be the focus of additional voluntary contributions accepted outside the Trust Fund, but it is specified that this would be exceptional and subject to approval by the Plenary. Consideration might be given to how this could impact on available resources for technical support, including on use of in-kind resources.
- d. Cost-effectiveness: Consideration of cost effectiveness involves a range of issues including:
- cost per unit effort in providing the technical support (with UN staff, including the Secretariat in Bonn, UN organizations and regional offices, being more costly than staff in many other international organizations, staff in local institutions, fellowship, JPOs and other seconded staff, and dedicated staff hosted in other institutions as an in-kind contribution)
  - quality and oversight of the support provided
  - additional benefits (such increased engagement and/or capacity building)
  - means of visibly addressing IPBES operating principles
  - extra costs resulting from the need for oversight and coordination (if at a distance)
- e. Transparency: For any work programme deliverable there will inevitably be a range of organizations with relevant technical experience that might be in a position to provide technical support, or in which secretariat staff providing that technical support might be located. It is therefore important to establish an open and transparent approach for identifying those organizations, and one which respects the IPBES operating principles and in particular the need for independence in delivering the Platform's work programme. In addition, once a selection has been made, thought needs to be given as to how to continue drawing on the interest and experience of the other organizations insofar as this is appropriate. These issues are discussed further in the guidance on strategic partnerships.
- f. Roles and responsibilities: In order to ensure that the necessary technical support is delivered, there will need to be clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and a clear commitment to deliver. This will be very straightforward where the support is provided by secretariat staff or where support is delivered through contracted services, but may be less straightforward where that support is provided through in-kind support of any kind. These issues are discussed further in the guidance on strategic partnerships.
- g. Coordination and common approaches: Where technical support is provided from geographically different locations, or from different organizations, there will be a clear need to ensure the necessary coordination by the secretariat, and that wherever appropriate common methods and approaches are employed. For example, technical support for regional assessments would be quite appropriately located within the regions, but secretariat coordination would be required in order to help ensure *inter alia* that IPBES principles and procedures are applied in a consistent manner, and to facilitate the sharing of experiences and best practices across regions.
- h. Capacity building: It is valuable to consider how technical support can be used as a basis for capacity building. At its simplest this may be the opportunity to use fellowships in supporting delivery of technical support, while at the other end of the spectrum there may be increased collaboration and sharing of experience between organizations in different regions, each of which is supporting delivery of regional activities.

### III. Means and opportunities for addressing technical support needs

9. The following options would seem to be the most appropriate for meeting technical support needs of the IPBES work programme as it is currently drafted. It is anticipated that for each deliverable the most appropriate means would be identified, based on a combination of one or more approaches depending on the size, nature and degree of complexity of the technical support required.

- a. Secretariat positions: There are clear functional and administrative advantages to having technical support provided by secretariat staff, in relation to ensuring coherence across the support provided and to facilitate coordination and communications. However there would need to be significant increase in the number of staff required to support the current draft work programme, with significant cost implications. Secretariat staff providing technical support could be located in Bonn or in any other UN office, including regional offices.
  - b. Secondments of staff: Seconded staff are functionally secretariat staff provided in-kind by another organization. As members of the Secretariat, such staff could be located in Bonn or in any other UN office, including the regional offices, or they could be co-located with other organizations with appropriate technical credentials, including within the organization that has seconded them. Whilst the costs of providing such staff secondments would be expected to be borne by the organization seconding them, any expenses associated with carrying out their work (such as travel and DSA for participating in meetings) would likely come from the IPBES budget. Organizations would generally be most interested in seconding staff where those staff are working on issues of interest to the seconding organization, so care must be taken in ensuring independence of their work. Such arrangements could also include UN Junior Professional Officers, and other positions seconded from Governments.
  - c. Fellowships: Fellowship programmes can be used to help provide technical support within the secretariat or another organization, and a degree of mentoring will be required in addition to oversight. Fellows are likely to be co-located either with secretariat staff who are either providing technical support or able to mentor a fellow who is doing so, or with a technical support unit of some kind. Although they are a slightly different category, all of these points would also apply to volunteers and interns.
  - d. Dedicated technical support units: Dedicated technical support units could be established for supporting major work programme activities, such as the delivery of individual thematic assessments or the coordination of capacity building activities, or for more ongoing functions, such as maintenance of the catalogue of assessments and policy support tools, or data management. While these could comprise secretariat staff, they could also comprise locally hired staff that have either been contracted by IPBES or are provided and funded by another organization that have appropriate technical and (where relevant) regional knowledge. The costs could be covered from the IPBES budget through a contractual arrangement, or could be provided in-kind or through resources sought elsewhere. In order to ensure that such arrangements were consistent with IPBES needs and operating principles, appropriate legal agreements may be required. Relevant issues are discussed further in the guidance on strategic partnerships.
  - e. Regional 'hubs' or centres of excellence: These could fall within the scope of technical support units, although regional hubs or identified centres of excellence may be considered for the provision of support at national and regional levels across a broad range of IPBES-related activities, both to support delivery of the IPBES work programme (working closely with other technical support activities), to build capacity through increased networking and the sharing of experience, and for communications and engagement at regional level.
-