Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
Third session
Bonn, Germany, 12–17 January 2015
Item 5 (a) of the provisional agenda*

Initial work programme of the Platform: task forces on capacity-building, knowledge and data (including data and management plan/system) and indigenous and local knowledge systems

Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network strategy in support of the capacity-building activities of the Platform

Note by the secretariat

The annex to the present note sets out a report by the United Nations Development Programme on the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network (BES-Net) strategy in support of the capacity-building activities of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. The report is reproduced as received, without formal editing.

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* IPBES/3/1.

Annex

Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network strategy in support of the capacity-building activities of the Platform

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

In 2010, UNDP was requested through the Busan Outcome 1 to play a special role in developing capacity to support the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), to help enable effective management of biodiversity and ecosystems worldwide, implementing the three Rio Conventions and related Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in a way that contributes to long-term human well-being and sustainable development. UNDP's commitment to supporting IPBES is set out in UNDP's biodiversity framework, The Future We Want: Biodiversity and Ecosystems, Driving Sustainable Development - Biodiversity and Ecosystems Global Framework 2012-2020, which was approved by the UNDP Executive Group in September 2012. This agreed strategy constitutes the basis for UNDP support for the development of the Platform, together with UNEP, FAO and UNESCO, in line with the United Nations Collaborative Partnership Agreement (IPBES/2/8).

This support is aligned with UNDP's mission to help countries achieve the simultaneous eradication of poverty and significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion, as set out in UNDP's new Strategic Plan, Changing with the World: UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017, since decision-making based on sound science and traditional knowledge is critical for maintaining and enhancing the goods and services provided by biodiversity and ecosystems, which underpin sustainable development.

UNDP wishes to contribute its capacity building expertise at the country-level (this includes national, sub-national and local levels), capitalize on the accumulated knowledge of best practices and challenges in the field, and bring practitioners into the science-policy arena.

Through partnerships with the Norwegian Environment Agency and SwedBio at the Stockholm Resilience Centre, UNDP is therefore developing and implementing a Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network (BES-Net), to help countries tackle science-policy questions critical to effective management of biodiversity and ecosystems worldwide, thereby contributing to long-term human well-being and sustainable development.

The objective of BES-Net is to develop and manage a capacity building network of networks that strengthens the connectivity among existing institutions and relevant actors (policy-makers, scientists/knowledge-holders and practitioners) involved in the field of biodiversity and ecosystem services and to provide a "one-stop shop" that harnesses the energy generated by the new IPBES Platform.

The network is supported by face-to-face capacity building activities, a matchmaking facility (with both face-to-face and online activities), and a cutting-edge web portal.

In implementing its mandate, BES-Net is following an inclusive approach and collaborating with, amongst others, the biodiversity-related MEAs.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE BES-NET STRATEGY

The initial BES-Net strategy was developed in 2012 in collaboration with the Norwegian Government and UNEP-WCMC. It stemmed from the IPBES discussions on capacity building needs in the field of biodiversity and ecosystem services and was informed by other processes such as the series of National Capacity Self-Assessment projects supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) from 2001 to 2008 and by the experiences of the One UN Climate Change Learning Partnership (UN CC:Learn) and of the International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network (IW:Learn).

The strategy was presented at the IPBES Panama meeting as document UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/INF/14: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (BES)–Net: A capacity building network for the interface between science, policy and implementation. Following positive feedback, a consultation was held on the paper. This consultation identified gaps in terms of capacity building, and suggested addressing

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[1] The Busan Outcome is the report of the third ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting on an Intergovernmental science-policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services that was held in Busan, Republic of Korea, on 7–11 June 2010. The reference to UNDP's important role in building capacity in the United Nations System is contained in paragraph 5 of the Annex of document IPBES/3/3.

these through a network approach that strengthens the connectivity between existing institutions involved in this work.

As a starting point, a draft strategy for the BES-Net web portal was developed and presented as an information document to IPBES-2 in Antalya in 2013 (IPBES/2/INF/15).

Since then, the BES-Net strategy has been updated to best respond to the needs of IPBES as defined in its first programme of work for 2014-2018. UNDP representatives attended the two 2014 meetings of the IPBES Task Force on Capacity Building as resource people, to support the thinking on the implementation of the IPBES capacity building activities; the outcomes of these meetings were incorporated into the BES-Net strategy and the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the BES-Net web portal development (see Annex A).

Informal consultations with policy-makers, scientists and practitioners were also held to refine the strategy and formalize the network at side-events: in Hyderabad (Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP-11), Jeju (IUCN World Conservation Congress), Bonn (IPBES-1), as well as the Kuala Lumpur informal capacity building consultation convened by IPBES and in Pyeongchang (CBD COP-12). A side event on BES-Net was also organized at the CBD COP-12 with participation from the IPBES Secretariat, the Secretariat of the CBD and UNESCO. In addition, at the end of October 2014, the BES-Net team – in collaboration with the IPBES Secretariat and with support from the IPBES Stakeholder forum and IUCN – conducted a short online survey on online networking tools (see Annex B) to inform the ToR for the BES-Net web portal, to be launched in 2015.

BES-NET AND LINKS WITH THE IPBES WORK PROGRAMME

BES-Net is UNDP's contribution to the capacity building work of IPBES (deliverable 1b).

A key element of BES-Net is promoting dialogue around the same thematic areas in which IPBES assessments are being conducted, as well as in key areas of UNDP's work on biodiversity and ecosystems management for development. This element will tie in with the development of face-to-face mechanisms for capacity building in all the work streams of IPBES, including assessments, knowledge generation, access to data and information, and policy-relevant tools and methodologies.

Further, various IPBES Expert Groups and Task Forces as well as the IPBES Secretariat have identified the BES-Net web-portal as the partner of choice to support the delivery of specific elements of the IPBES work programme. This includes deliverables 1(a) (Matchmaking Facility); 4(a) (Catalogue of relevant assessments); and 4(c) (Catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies).

The BES-Net web portal will support the implementation of these deliverables - in line with decisions taken at IPBES-3 and in support of decision IPBES/2/5 - and the BES-Net strategy makes provision for them to be individual modules of the BES-Net web portal, bearing clear IPBES branding (logo of the platform and of the four United Nations bodies associated with it), to ensure visibility and to reflect the fact that they are IPBES products developed according to the IPBES principles and processes. Clear mechanisms for the development and management of these modules – including the roles of the various IPBES bodies, Task Forces, Expert Groups and Technical Support Units, and collaboration with the BES-Net team – will be defined.

The other components of the BES-Net web portal will have their own visual identity, separate from IPBES, as per the recommendation of the first meeting of the Task Force on Capacity Building held in Trondheim. The portal will also provide space to indicate the support of all network members, including governments, stakeholders and the Secretariats of the MEAs.

The ToR for the BES-Net web portal include provisions for the development of these online products (see Annex A).

In addition to managing BES-Net, UNDP will continue to provide technical backstopping on capacity building, contributing ideas and knowledge to the formulation of the IPBES work programme and its implementation in regions, and contributing to the Task Force on Capacity Building.

BES-NET IN DETAIL

At the heart of BES-Net lies the network of people involved in the field of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (BES), with the aim to improve the dialogue among this network so as to enhance BES-relevant policies and their effective implementation.

Three distinct user groups have been identified for the web portal: Practitioners, Scientists and Policymakers, as broadly defined below:

- Practitioners: Practitioners (implementers) are people who work on the ground, directly or with intermediaries, to define and manage biodiversity and ecosystem challenges. This includes, for example, members of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs), members of the private sector as well as indigenous people and local communities (who are also knowledge-holders). Practitioners may be looking for training, workshops and seminars; interested in knowledge-sharing among stakeholders and agencies; or perhaps seeking to inform research for policymakers.

- Scientists: Scientists are broadly described as holders and generators of knowledge and can include scientists from academic institutions, NGO researchers or traditional holders and generators of knowledge as well as scientists involved in managing biodiversity on the ground. Western science, indigenous, traditional, local and other knowledge systems can all significantly contribute to the sustainable management of ecosystems. Scientists and other knowledge holders may be looking for funding, access to ecosystems assessment data, shared expertise including across countries, lessons learned and ways to increase capacity.

Policymakers: Policymakers include people who help shape policy and legislation, in both the public sector and civil society. One function of BES-Net is to help identify and prioritize key scientific information needed for policymakers at appropriate scales and catalyze efforts to generate new knowledge by engaging in dialogue with key scientific organizations and funding organizations. Policymakers need to convey their needs for information, and may need assistance to demystify the science and understand at a relevant level the concepts and findings presented by scientists and other knowledge holders. They are key players who can use research to inform decision-making systems.

The structure of this capacity building network —which comprises face to face activities, a matchmaking facility (with both face-to-face and an online component) and a web-portal, is shown in the figure below.
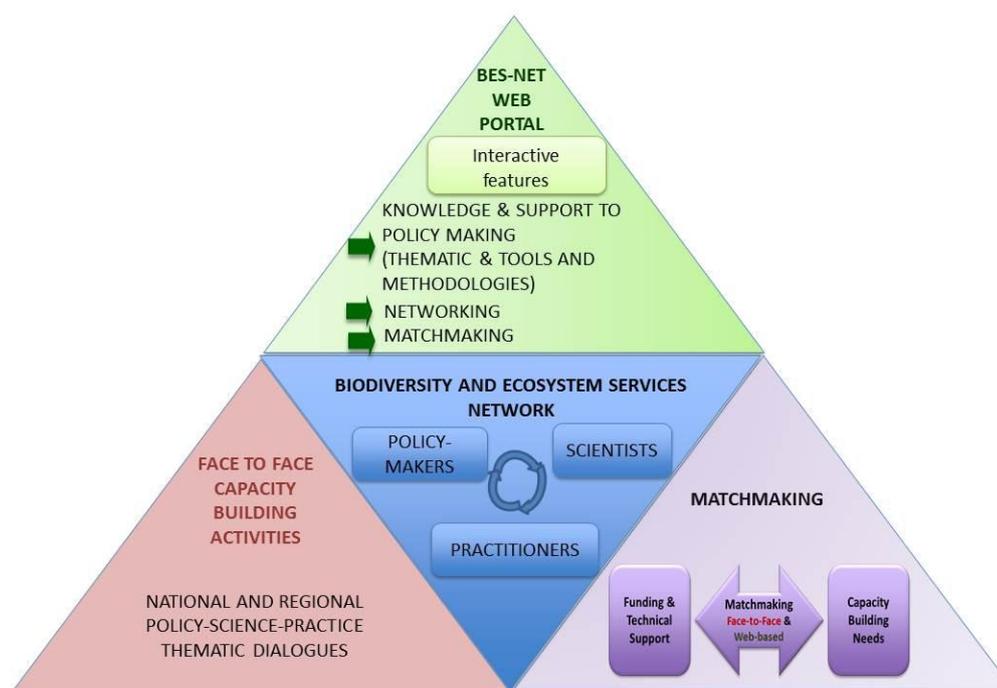

Figure 1: Components of the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network (BES-Net)

A. Face to face capacity building activities

It is proposed that **face-to-face capacity building activities** are undertaken in support of the IPBES capacity building activities and UNDP's biodiversity and ecosystems work. They would include country-level and regional science-policy-practice dialogue events on a priority theme for IPBES facilitated annually. For example, a science-policy-practice dialogue on resilience will be held in Ethiopia in 2015.

B. The Capacity Building Matchmaking Facility

IPBES will put in place a capacity-building matchmaking facility, with the aim of bringing together those who have capacity building needs with those able to help meet those needs, whether technical or

financial. The matchmaking facility would encompass both physical meetings (such as donor roundtables) and online support.

BES-Net will support this facility by:

- hosting and managing its online component (to be confirmed following IPBES-3);

- acting as a provider of support to meet the highest capacity building needs (as identified by IPBES) through the face to face activities of BES-Net, depending on available funding;

- helping to mobilize its network as both providers and beneficiaries of capacity building; and

- helping to promote needs, events and opportunities.

C. The BES-Net web portal

The web portal, to be launched in 2015 (see Annex A) will provide a one-stop-shop to guide users to network members' scientific information, information on tools and methodologies, best practices and e-learning. It will support the dialogue among the three communities of users, the operationalization of the IPBES matchmaking facility, and communication around the face to face activities. It will be developed through a step-wise and modular approach, with different modules developed and managed in different ways. It will provide interactive features to support the multidisciplinary dialogue between network participants, in a demand-driven fashion.

Overall, the web portal will:

- support the development and management of a network of networks;

- appropriately refer to the www.ipbes.net website and to multiple other partner and stakeholder sites;

- serve as a one-stop-shop for information, so as to promote and increase open access to data, publications and other existing information produced by network organizations and by IPBES, noting that the IPBES task force on knowledge and data will develop a way to provide access to the data and literature used by IPBES in its reports and that BES-Net will not replicate this work;

- increase access to existing policy-relevant tools and guidance materials, by showcasing new learning material and policy support tools developed by IPBES and other stakeholders and enhancing their use through the development of communication material around them;

- promote a dialogue among network participants in order to support decision-making on biodiversity and ecosystem services by identifying key questions from decision-makers, and supporting the process of identifying experts and practitioners as resource people;

- support individual learning, peer-to-peer learning and e-learning;

- provide tools for online collaboration;

- support the development of communities of best practice globally, regionally, and at the country level;

- support multiple languages;

- support the development and management of select IPBES products and deliverables, as requested by the IPBES decision-making bodies; and

- be a gateway to and complement face-to-face capacity building activities.

The web portal would provide access to three inter-related modules as per Figure 2 below.
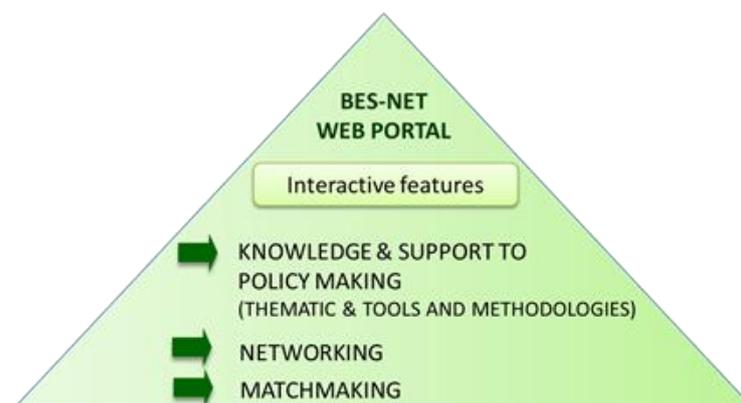
Figure 2: Proposed structure of the BES-Net web portal

1) **Module 1: Knowledge and support to policy-making** with two entry points:

(a) thematic **areas** guiding users through existing resources (external websites) and offering an opportunity to upload or link to new material such as documents (reports, policy briefs, full scientific articles, open access articles and grey literature or abstracts), videos (hosted by YouTube, Vimeo and including interviews, short documentaries and RSA animations, live streams of lectures) and e-learning modules (such as webinars or massive open online course (MOOCs)).

The portal will propose various thematic entry points. The focus for the first year will be to populate two thematic areas as priorities in relation to IPBES: pollination, pollinators and food production, as well as land degradation and restoration if approved by IPBES-3. In addition to priority thematic areas, basic landing pages will be created for a wide range of topics linking to external websites and with very brief summaries of partners' resources on these topics (see the restoration link on the Fuse IQ demo website for an example (see http://bn.fuseiqlab.com/01-homeA.html, usernames and password are both: fuseiq).

Members of the network and BES-Net staff would be able to submit new content, following moderation by the BES-Net team.

The web-portal should provide opportunity to the users to find resource people in a given field, ask questions to a panel of experts, put a question to the general public to comment on the available information and identify knowledge gaps, find policy tools and methodologies, or capacity building support in this thematic area. This would hereby link with the policy tools and methodology entry point, the networking and the matchmaking facility modules.

b)   **Cross-cutting policy tools and methodologies.**

This will be a place holder for policy briefs, videos, e-learning modules, information on best practices, and the two IPBES catalogues of policy tools and methodologies and of assessments (to be confirmed at IPBES 3).

This entry point would also give access to other cross-cutting resources focusing for example on biodiversity finance or valuation of ecosystem services.

Here, users will have the opportunity to identify a need, request a policy brief, or share content such as a new e-learning module or a document on lessons learnt and best practices, following moderation by the BES-Net team.

2)   **Module 2: Networking**

This will be an entry point for users who wish to identify themselves as part of one of the three user communities of science, policy and practice. This module will facilitate the development of a network of networks by putting people in touch (find experts/poll experts), and through the sharing of information and discussions in an online forum. This forum, as well as the feedback options in the two previous modules and the comments received through the forum established for the IPBES catalogues, will also allow the identification of policy questions; this will inform the development of new information material, tools and methodologies as resources become available to make this possible.

The emphasis will be on developing the capacity of those involved in policy-making and implementation, and the services offered by the portal staff will include facilitating the translation of scientific research findings into meaningful guidance for policy and implementation, helping users answer queries and find information they require, and channeling the applied research needs of practitioners and policy-makers back to knowledge producers. This module could also be used to develop and manage rosters of experts.

3.   **Module 3: Capacity building Matchmaking Facility**

It is proposed that this module would host the online component of the IPBES capacity building matchmaking facility. Collaboration with other matchmaking facilities with similar objectives could be envisaged.

This module would also be linked to the information related to face to face capacity building events and to the networking module where specific capacity building needs, interests and support can be identified.

4.   **Links between the three modules**

These three modules would be closely inter-related and reinforcing. For example, a policy maker looking for support to undertake an assessment on land degradation could either use a thematic entry point on land degradation under the first module listed above, a tools and methodologies entry point on assessment, or directly look for a practitioner in this field through the networking module. S/he could also be put in touch with a fellow who has recently been funded through the matchmaking facility in this area.

IMPLEMENTATION

Through partnerships with the Norwegian Environment Agency and SwedBio at the Stockholm Resilience Centre, UNDP has appointed a consultant for one year as a Capacity Network Coordinator through its Biodiversity Global Programme. The consultant is supported by three UNDP staff members who together contribute to the IPBES process, for example as resource people at the meetings of the IPBES Task Force on Capacity Building, and at BES-Net meetings on the margins of IPBES.

The core BES-Net team is planned to grow from one to three or four Knowledge Managers over time. The Knowledge Manager(s) will manage the web portal as well as organize and facilitate face to face capacity building activities.

The UNDP Nairobi Global Policy Centre has also appointed a policy advisor and a knowledge manager who will provide support to BES-Net as a core part of their job. The Centre, with an expanded mandate on strengthening the linkages between environmental sustainability, human development and resilience, has offered programmatic support to BES-Net; discussions on this arrangement are ongoing. The Policy Centre also provides a potential hub for dialogue events, in addition to regional and national centers of excellence around the world.

The BES-Net work is expected to be guided by a Steering Committee composed of UNDP staff, and representatives from funding partners, including relevant representatives involved in the decision-making, development and management of the IPBES component2,. The Steering Committee will decide on the addition of new members.

UNDP will mobilize its network in support of BES-Net, including global teams, global policy centers as well as its regional and national offices, and portfolio of biodiversity and ecosystems projects managed in 132 countries. They will be involved in the development of the content of the BES-Net web portal and in the organization of face-to-face capacity building activities. Their capacity building expertise, and knowledge of best practices and challenges in the science-policy-practice arena will therefore be capitalized upon.

In implementing its strategy, BES-Net will also mobilize a network made up of all the existing capacity building programs of the network of partners. An indicative but by no means exhaustive list includes the capacity building programs of the biodiversity and ecosystem-related MEAs, particularly the Clearing House Mechanism of the CBD; the CBD's work to support NBSAPs; the capacity building work of UN agencies (FAO, UNESCO, UNEP and UNDP), the World Bank and GEF; the commissions and specialist groups of IUCN; the Sub-Global Assessment Network coordinated by UNEP-WCMC and The Cropper Foundation; the GEO-BON and GBIF networks; the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership; the work of the many community partners of the Equator Initiative and the UNDP-managed Small Grants Programme; and many other related initiatives, including those of the IPBES Stakeholder Forum.

Further consultations will be conducted with the various IPBES Task Forces and Technical Support Units, Expert Groups, the IPBES Secretariat and other IPBES bodies on the development of the IPBES

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[2] This would include the various Task Forces and their Technical Support Unit, relevant Expert groups, IPBES bodies and the IPBES Secretariat,

components including working modalities (coordination mechanisms, timelines and resources), assessment of user requirements, monitoring and evaluation and evaluation of impact.

Ongoing Discussions with the Sub-Global Assessment Network and the Bio Bridge initiative, as well as with those involved with the CBD LifeWeb Initiative and the UNCCD Capacity Building Marketplace will be continued.

2015 will see the development and launch of the BES-Net web portal and the first face-to-face capacity building activities in the form of a science-policy-practice dialogue to be held in Ethiopia on resilience to drought and food security.

ANNEX A: TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE BES-NET WEB PORTAL

Title: Website design and development for the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network(BES-Net)
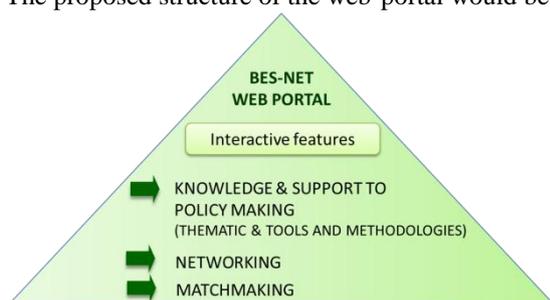
Responsible unit: Biodiversity Global Programme

Assignment: January 2015- December 2015, with a possible extension depending on funding

BACKGROUND (AS PER THE STRATEGY)

PROPOSED STRUCTURE OF THE WEB-PORTAL

The proposed structure of the web-portal would be as follows:

This would be reflected in an attractive and user friendly home-page.

It would provide interactive features and three main entry points for the user, providing access to three inter-related modules.

The web-portal will be developed in a step-wise and modular approach, with different modules being developed and managed in different ways. For example, the IPBES components will bear the IPBES visual identity (logos and overall graphic design) and cater for specific management models.

Modules:

1.   **Module 1: Knowledge and support to policy-making with two entry points:**

a)   **thematic areas** guiding users through existing resources (external websites) and offering an opportunity to upload or link to new material such as documents (reports, policy briefs, full scientific articles, open access articles and grey literature or abstracts), videos (hosted by YouTube, Vimeo and including interviews, short documentaries and RSA animations, live streams of lectures) and e-learning modules (such as webinars or massive open online course (MOOCs)).

The portal will propose various thematic entry points. The focus for the first year will be to populate two thematic areas as priorities in relation to IPBES: pollination, pollinators and food production, as well as land degradation and restoration. In addition to priority thematic areas basic landing pages will be created for a wide range of topics linking to external websites and with very brief summaries of partners' resources on these topics (see the restoration link on the Fuse IQ demo website for an example (see http://bn.fuseiqlab.com/01-homeA.html , usernames and password are both: fuseiq).

Here, the administrators of the web-platform would be able to upload content in a very easy fashion and users would be able to submit new content to be vetted by the administrators before being uploaded.

The web-portal should provide opportunity to the users to find resource people in a given field, ask questions to a panel of experts, put a question to the general public to comment on the available information and identify knowledge gaps, find policy tools and methodologies, or capacity building support in this thematic area. This would hereby link with the policy tools and methodology entry point, the networking and the matchmaking facility modules.

b) **Cross-cutting policy tools and methodologies.** This will be a place holder for policy briefs, videos, e-learning modules, information on best practices, and the two IPBES catalogues of policy tools and methodologies and of assessments. These catalogues will be managed in a particular fashion and bear the IPBES visual identity (see Annexes I, II and III).

This entry point would also give access to other cross-cutting resources focusing for example biodiversity finance or valuation of ecosystem services.

Here, the administrators from the BES-Net team at UNDP would manage content, and options would be given to the users to suggest new content (share a new video/document, request a new tool) to be vetted by the UNDP team. Links would also be provided to the thematic areas of work, capacity building and networking entry points.

2. **Module 2: Networking**

This will be an entry point for users who wish to identify themselves as part of the three user communities of science, policy and practice. This module will facilitate the development of a network of networks by putting people in touch, and through the sharing of information as well as experience through a forum or any other appropriate online networking tool. This forum, as well as the feedback options in the two previous modules and the comments received through the forum established for the IPBES catalogues, will also allow the identification of policy questions; this will inform the development of new information material, tools and methodologies in a demand-driven fashion.

The emphasis will be on developing the capacity of those involved in policy-making and implementation, and the services offered by the portal staff will include facilitating the translation of scientific research findings into meaningful guidance for policy and implementation, helping users answer queries and find information they require, and channeling the applied research needs of practitioners and policy-makers back to knowledge producers.

Here, the user registers online as a network participant who is part of one of the three user communities (policy makers, scientist, and practitioner) and chooses to get in touch with other communities. In doing so, they are offered a range of choices/interactive features: connect with others-including experts, poll practitioners on a certain topic (links with the thematic entry points), ask a question to the BES-Net team, find capacity building opportunities (linking with the matchmaking module), and stay connected (with a link to various capacity building events, a possibility to register for a newsletter, to connect on social media, to subscribe to RSS feeds).

Online discussion forums will enable policy-makers and implementers to pose questions and research needs, and moderators could help link them to available resources.

An online registration tool with creation of user profiles will enable the development of a contacts database of network participants.

A live chat option could be developed to facilitate interaction with other users and with the BES-Net staff, depending on available funding and staffing of the BES-Net portal.

The web-portal could also support other IPBES streams of work, such as the development and management of rosters of experts, as required.

3. **Module 3: Capacity building Matchmaking Facility**

IPBES will put in place a capacity-building matchmaking facility, with the aim of bringing together those who have capacity building needs with those able to help meet those needs, whether technical or financial. The matchmaking facility would encompass both face to face enabling activities, such as meetings, donor roundtables, etc.).

It is proposed that this module would host the online component of the IPBES capacity building matchmaking facility and that the first elements of the matchmaking facility will be developed starting June 2015 (fellowships, mentorship, training, secondments, etc.). Further elements dealing with additional capacity building activities will follow.

Collaboration with other matchmaking facilities with similar objectives could be envisaged.

More information on the proposed IPBES matchmaking facility is available as Annex I.

This module would also provide information on face-to-face capacity building events hosted by the IPBES matchmaking facility and by BES-Net. User profiles for people involved in those capacity building activities should be integrated into the users' contact database.

4. **Links between the three modules**

These three modules would be closely inter-related and reinforcing. For example, a policy maker looking for support to undertake an assessment on land degradation could either use a thematic entry point under the first module listed above, a tools and methodology entry point, or directly look for a practitioner in this field through the networking module. S/he could also be put in touch with a fellow who has recently been funded through the matchmaking facility in this area.

SUPPORT AND WORKING MODALITIES

Demo website

From September 2012 through February 2013, a BES-Net Strategy and Prototype was developed to explore and review conceptual ideas and possibilities. These were reviewed by potential participating organizations and received very positive feedback and support. This work was performed with Fuse IQ, a website design and development consultant. The link to the simple HTML mockup is the following: http://bn.fuseiqlab.com/01-homeA.html (Usernames and password are both: fuseiq). It provides a basis for thinking about the development of the fully fledged web-portal, although notably the BES-Net strategy has evolved since then.

Internal Capacities

This project will be led by a project manager from the UNDP team who will relay information, funnel decisions and be guided by a steering committee. The staffing for the portal, once live, is planned to grow from one to three or four Knowledge Managers overtime. The Knowledge Manager(s) will be trained on managing the new system by the web developer. The Knowledge Manager(s) will add and edit content, moderate submissions and collate content resources. Ideally, they would have complementary technical competencies in the field of BES, complementary language skills and would be working as a virtual team to ensure continuous support of the web-portal throughout time zones.

Pictures and partners logos are available but some graphic design work (BES-Net logo and banners, layout of the website, templates for user profiles, newsletters, etc.) will be needed to fully develop the visual identify of the BES-Net web portal.

Working modalities

The web design and development company needs to be fully connected via Internet, email and telephone, so that all of the day-to-day tasks can be conducted via electronic means. The selected company will be office or home-based, possess the necessary communications facilities at their own premises, and cover all the costs involved in the assignment themselves.

The company is expected to provide regular updates by phone / Skype / email periodically during the assignment or as needed, at no additional cost for the BES-Net team, and to be available during a reasonable amount of time during Bangkok office hours to facilitate coordination and quick turn-around.

The company is also expected to attend five face-to-face meetings throughout the engagement, including to train BES-Net staff through two face-to-face trainings, and to produce a training manual for the BES-Net staff and a basic guide for users.

PROPOSED FEATURES AND SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE WEB-PORTAL

The outcome of this work will be the launch of a web-based portal that best targets the goals of UNDP and its partners and clients, such as IPBES.

The major components that have been identified as crucial features are:

a. **A Content Management System (other proposals possible)**

Open-source content management systems (CMS) are seen as the best technology to develop the BES-Net web portal. However, there might be issues of updates, as the portal should be live for at least 4 years. UNDP is open to other options, including customized unique software. A strong case should be provided in the proposal for this choice, including comments on the ease of finding excellent developers to support further work on the web-portal.

b. **An Integrated Taxonomy and Tagging System**: One feature that will pull all the content of the site together could be an integrated taxonomy and tagging system or ITTS. The ITTS will need to be strategized at the foundational level and the technical solution – the content management system (CMS) or the unique software – will provide the means for BES-Net staff to update the ITTS terms and tags. All content types will be classified through the ITTS so the CMS/unique software can semantically provide natural connections among content types. For example as a user finds a resource, the tags and meta information provided may link her to other content types that share that topic, such as a video, Policy Brief or Case Study. Visitors will be encouraged to register online and provide information about themselves and the list of profile options will be integrated into the ITTS, thus linking users to tags and lists of other users that share an interest.

c. **Powerful Search:** This site will be very content-heavy. Content will include a wide variety of file types such as Excel, PDF, video, audio, Word, PPT. All documents and videos would be included in a document and in a video library, easily searchable using the ITTS. The Search tool will need the ability to search within these types of material. The Search tool will need to filter based upon taxonomy and or other defined categories. The Search tool should be an easy-to-use field to create a very low barrier of use, yet also have advanced features for the more tech-savvy.

d. **Easy management of information by the administrators' team and by users**. The web-portal will support material such as documents (reports, policy briefs), videos (hosted by YouTube, Vimeo and including interviews, short documentaries and RSA animations, live streams of lectures), e-learning modules (such as webinars or massive open online course (MOOCs)) and blog posts. Users should be able to post this information, both in the form of a summary or an abstract, as well as the full document/video/links. Upon approval by the administrators, uploaded data would be made available in a research library and on a 'latest news' board, on a case by case basis, as decided by the administrator.

e. **Possibility for numerous administrators and various administrators,** to cater for the various management models of different modules, in particular the IPBES components. That could be achieved through various levels of administrative access or through the creation of online collaboration tools with clear access and roles for different contributors and users. Please see Annexes I, II and III on specific management requirements for the IPBES modules.

f. Creation of user profiles/dashboards and overall user experience

The web-portal will allow users to create detailed online profiles. Draft categories are presented in Annex VI.

It is expected that there would be two tiers of user profiles: the first tier would be for generic users and could not be very detailed (detailed CVs would not be required). The second tier would include only experts selected through the various IPBES processes (i.e. members of the IPBES task forces and expert groups, authors or reviewers of IPBES assessments, etc.) and by the BES-Net staff based on their full CVs and contributions to the platform. All profiles would be searchable by both users and administrators but selected experts would have clear recognition and would be included in rosters of experts. The short profiles would be public.

The profile will be available to them to edit upon login. Once created, a customized user dashboard based on the extended profile will provide a personalized experience that lists contributions, followed users, new contributions per favorite and latest forum discussions people are interested in/contributed to or status of publication of one of their contributions. Users will also be able to view other registered users' profiles on the site and make connections via email, the forum and/or live chat.

Alerts should be automatically sent to their emails when content is added on the web-portal in the area(s) of interest of each user (new thematic module created, new tool or methodology made available, new post on the forum, new event, etc.). This, together with ease of navigation, clarity of the structure and quality of the content, will enable targeted and effective user experiences and ensure the success of the web-portal.

g. Options for an easily manageable users' database.

A database of user profiles will be created for users to easily search for people and for the administrators of the web-portal to create rosters that can easily be downloaded and published on the portal according to specific needs (i.e. publishing a list of experts on a given technical topic in a given area).

Options for uploading large numbers of emails and other information about new users, managing duplicates and spam, and exporting the database as an excel spreadsheet will also be provided.

h. A newsletter

A template for a newsletter will be created. A system to easily populate and automatically send the newsletter (to the registered users who have opted to receive the newsletter) via a BES-Net generic email will be developed. The newsletter will also be downloadable from the BES-Net home page.

i. A "latest news" board will be available on the home page, with access to latest information and uploads on the website, latest social media feeds, latest new forum topics.

j. An online calendar of events will be created to easily share information with network users and enter the details of the events in people's calendars. NB: Facebook events could also be created and should work in sync with this feature.

k. The web-portal should cater for at **least 20 email addresses for administrators and for a generic email address with automatic responses to users upon**: registration, proposal to upload content, registration to the newsletter, and responses provided to a post on a topic of interest in the forum for example.

Social Media: This feature will enable users to stay informed and connected with BES-Net using established social media channels. They should be fully integrated with the web-portal and, for example, we anticipate BES-Net and partner feeds published on the portal. These will include LinkedIn (including potentially for easy registration new users and in order to connect to LinkedIn groups), Facebook (including Facebook events), or linking to videos posted on YouTube and Vimeo, as priorities. A Twitter account will also be set-up.
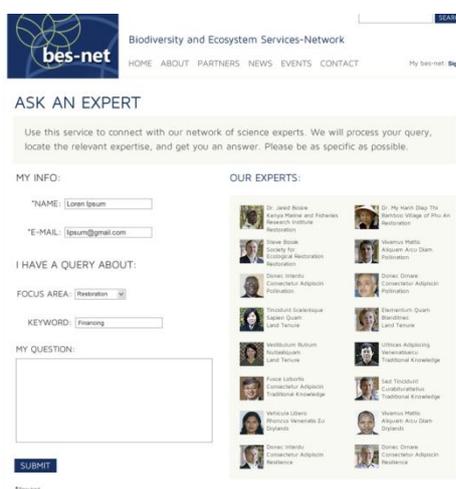
l. Allow RSS feeds

m. The web-portal should also **support multiple languages**. Due to costs of human translations, the Google Language API will be integrated and a "Translate This" button (Google Translate) included which allows users on the front end to select the language in which page content is displayed. Documents can be uploaded in any language and tagged with a language so that a user could, for example, search for all articles in French. Specific translations of key documents or of products developed specially by the BES-Net staff for users on demand could also be considered. The Knowledge Managers and BES-Net team will need to monitor and assess if there is a need for translation of document library attachments outside of this feature.

n. Interactive features:

This is a summary of the interactive features that the website should support:

1. *Search for information*: This feature will allow users to search the Knowledge Library database which includes links to a range of collected, curated and categorized knowledge products of various types – including documents and videos, webinars, even categorized third party websites (see as an example: http://www.uncclearn.org/knowledge-platforms). Users can search the Library according to language, theme, IPBES assessment topic, keywords, country, region, etc. The library will need to be prepopulated with content prior to site launch. Exciting possibilities exist to work with the holders of extensive biodiversity-related databases (e.g. links to open access journal articles) to make these available through the BES-Net web portal. Fields for inclusion are:

o   Filter by topic of interest (from list of IPBES topics and others)
o   Filter by country/region
o   Search by keyword(s)
o   Search by language
o   Search by author

2. *Ask an Expert*: This feature will allow users to pose a question to individuals listed on a roster of "experts" (who can be practitioners, scientists, traditional knowledge holders, or policymakers) who agree to sign up. Questions are reviewed / moderated by BES-Net staff first so the experts' time is not wasted, e.g. answers may already be on the BES-Net site.

3. *Survey Practitioners*: This feature would allow users (in this case, scientists and policy makers) to poll practitioners on a certain question or issue, putting out a topic or question to vote or comment on. This may be a task for the Knowledge Managers to solicit polls and get the appropriate audiences to respond.

4. *Connect with resource people from the three communities of users*. Example, connect with Relevant Ministries as a Scientist or Practitioner: This feature will allow scientists or practitioners to connect with policymakers in specific national ministries or line ministries across all CBD Parties through a process moderated by BES-Net staff. This would necessitate a searchable database of all contacts. In the demo website, the following sequence was followed for the networking approach:

Further, an option for a given user to privately connect with another would be offered (with through email, LinkedIn or private chat, TBD). The BES-Net staff would be able to track the number of private messages to measure the success of the networking tool without seeing the content of the messages.

5.   *Share new findings* (document, link, video or e-learning module). This feature will allow users to post and disseminate new findings in module 1, together with an abstract/short presentation following the following template for documents:
o   Share abstract (Text Area / Field to paste content)
o   Upload document button
o   Categorize and tag "Finding" per topic area/theme, country, language, etc.
o   Comment on policy implications (Text Area)

And the following template for videos:
o   View sample video button
o   Add your video button (this would allow linking to YouTube/Vimeo videos and allow upload and encoding services following approval by BES-Net team)
o   Categorize and tag video per topic area/theme, country, language, etc.

Submissions will go into a moderation queue for review and approval by the web portal staff. Approved documents will be available through future searches on the website.

6.   *Identify a knowledge gap*: This feature will allow users to send feedback to the BES-Net team through an online form ('Ask a question' text field/'Make a suggestion' text field). BES-Net staff will moderate this, directing people to answers if they are already on the web-portal, or posting the request on the forum to see whether this is available elsewhere, and on a repository of knowledge gaps to inform the IPBES process for example.

7.   *Commission a Policy Brief*. This feature will allow users to commission a policy brief based on experience of implementation on the ground or best available research and/or traditional knowledge on a certain issue according to IPBES topic, keywords, select themes, country, through an online form that would specify:

o   Title
o   Organization
o   Subject
o   Topic (from list of IPBES topics and others)
o   Background to the policy question at hand (text area)
o   How the information would be useful (text area)
o   Language desired (text area)

8.   *An "express interest in an event" feature* (via automated email providing a link to the interested user profile) allowing the BES-Net team to register interest for a specific event from users.

9.   *A "contact us" online form* linked to a generic BES-Net email address.

o.   **A forum,** developed to foster discussions among the three communities of users. Registered users would be able to create new topics and comment on existing threads. Those would be categorized in the same manner as the library of documents and videos for consistency, and moderated by the BES-Net staff, as appropriate, to ensure relevance and respect of all users. Options to post existing blog articles on the forum will be developed.

p.   **A live chat** option between users and with the BES-Net staff, depending on available resources

q.   Ways of **connecting among users** will be developed, either through email, LinkedIn, Facebook, or private message using the chat**.**

r.   The web-portal should be able to **support/link to e-learning modules,** such as webinars and massive open online course (MOOCs)

s. The web-portal should support/integrate **online collaboration tools** to support various processes such as the development of the IPBES catalogues if need be or any other collaboration on word, excel or PowerPoint documents. Examples of such tools suggested by users include: Google Docs, wikis, MS SharePoint, Etherpad, the former dimdim or Confluences). The end-products of these collaborations should be easily linkable/publishable on the web-platform.

t. **A mobile version of the site** will be created so that users can have access to at least some of the information and features of the website from their mobile devices.

u. **Feedback Tool(s):** The success of this evolving platform will depend upon regular feedback from users. This will take the form of in-person conversations, forum threads, online forms and surveys, allowing users to easily provide feedback. We anticipate discussing the viability of tools such as UserVoice and/or implementing feedback modules.

v. **An Application Programming Interface (API)** could be developed to support the development of the mobile site, to facilitate data management and to potentially share data with future partners;

w. **Thorough user analytics and reporting**: We anticipate Google Analytics with additional custom tracking methods. Alternate recommendations are welcome. Example data points that should be tracked and reported on are:
- Entry by user group type
- Entry point and path (including via social media)
- Location of users
- Referring URL
- Language
- Number of unique new visitors
- Number of unique page visits
- Number of new vs. returning users
- Number of bounces
- How frequently or recently users return
- Duration or length and depth of visit
- Keyword search traffic
- Top content traffic usage patterns
- Number of private messages exchanges
- Matches made through the matchmaking facility
- Download amounts and by whom

x. **Security and privacy.** Protection of the web-portal against hacking and spam and protection of private user information will be of critical importance.

y. **Easy management of all the elements of the web-portal by the BES-Net team of administrators is essential.** This include: managing the contacts' database and information library, creating new tags/categories in these and in the search tools, moderating the forum, linking the products of the online collaboration, linking to external websites and documents/videos hosted on social media and other platforms, duplicating parts of the website using a given structure (example: creating a new thematic area under module one), selecting the news going in the latest news part of the website, creating and sending the newsletter easily, managing all the visuals on the website (logos, banners, pictures, formatting of the text, etc.), setting up and support to management of the online collaborating tools, as well as management of Google analytics. Limited training (in person and using a manual) will be provided to this effect.

z. **Tools to effectively track and respond to the moderation needs of the web-platform** will be developed to ensure good coordination of a virtual team of administrators.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF CONSULTANCY

UNDP is currently seeking the services of a web design and development company to develop the BES-Net Web Portal over one year starting January 2015. It is expected that the majority of the structure of the web-portal will be in place by the end of July 2015.

After that point, the rest of the one-year contract will be used to develop the remaining elements, make minor modifications to the web-portal following its launch and feedback from the BES-Net team and users, and provide overall maintenance services.

Specific deliverables include:
o a complete test website to be created within two months;
o the delivery of priority content under module 1 a of the website and setting up of social media by mid-April 2015: two thematic modules (pollinators, pollination and food production, as well as land degradation and restoration), the tools and methodologies module and the networking module;
o the delivery of the remaining thematic areas and, with the exception of the IPBES catalogues and the IPBES matchmaking facility by mid-June;
o the IPBES catalogues and the first module of the matchmaking facility (fellowships, exchange and training, as needed by the IPBES process) by July 2015;
o the mobile site by July 2015;
o a testing phase with potential amendments to the web-portal starting August 2015;
o five face to face meetings with the team and potential partners/users; one person would be expected to attend three meetings in Bangkok, one in Bonn, Germany (TBC), and one in another international location (the bid needs to include these costs);
o two sets of training for the BES-Net staff in February/March and July/August, back to back with face to face meetings, as well as the production of a training manual for administrators and of a user guide; (the total would be five 5days meetings maximum)

Further, the selected company will be required to assist with domain name registration, referencing.

The selected company is also expected to arrange hosting of the web-portal until the end of 2015 (cost to be included in the bid).

The contract could be extended the following year to include:
o Support to the development of further thematic modules
o Support to the development of the fully-fledged online matchmaking facility
o Maintenance and trouble shooting
o Hosting

The company will work with a small team from the UNDP Biodiversity Global Programme, guided by a steering committee.

The company is expected to be able to manage long distance communications and coordination of the design and development of the BES-Net Web Portal with the international BGP team.

PROPOSAL STRUCTURE

Please respond to each section as ordered in your proposal. Provide enough information to describe your response to the technically adept as well as the neophyte.

Identify your firm
Please provide the following information.
- Name of your company
- Business entity (e.g. LLC, S-Corp, Independent, etc.)
- Type of company (e.g. Marketing and Design Firm, IT, Software Development, etc.)
- Location(s) of operation
- Names of Owners and Executive Management
- Primary Contact for this project proposal

- Years in business
- Average number of new clients per year
- Average number of maintenance/ongoing work clients per year

NOTE: If you plan on *partnering* with another firm as part of your proposed solution or if you are *planning to contract out some work* please provide the above information for your partner plus a paragraph or two describing the partnership relationship, including:

- The roles of each firm
- How many projects you have completed together and who was responsible for what
- Management and decision structure
- Any additional information that describes the added-value of the partnership to the success of the project

Qualifications and resources
Help us understand who you are and what your strengths are.
- Please describe your core competencies, including regarding training;
- Describe why this project is attractive to you and why you believe your firm would be ideal for its success;
- Provide 3-5 examples of similar projects you have been instrumental in creating;
- If you have worked for UNDP or any of its partners please make sure to highlight that work and provide references.

Technology and features

Describe the **technology** you are planning to use for this web-portal, including a compelling argument for the proposed CMS/unique software, addressing functionality, ease of maintenance, scalability, flexibility and longevity of the platform. This will include ease of finding other companies/free-lancers to further develop and maintain the platform and information on how much training will be needed for the BES-Net staff to fully master the management of the web-platform (including all graphic elements, management of all the databases and libraries, management of integration of social media, management of the feedback tool, all interactive features, online collaborative tools, and creation of new components within each module using the same architecture as the ones previously developed- for module 1 and 3 in particular). Describe your experience with it, your ability and experience creating custom modules, and your general capabilities with this platform/software, etc.

Please describe how you anticipate **meeting the functionality and features** as described above, including your ideas regarding:
- simple navigation, universal browser compatibility, clean layout, quality and fast Graphics and design, and multilanguage design;
- accessibility/usability: the online system should follow accessibility and usability standards so that it can be accessed and used by partners uploading content and links without delays or compatibility issues. Some standards include: good semantic markup, small page sizes, efficient and meaningful link structure, meaningful graphics and no graphics as text, small amount of JavaScript or flash and have completely separate content (semantic code) and presentation (CSS) when designing the system;
- proposed user flows for each category of users describing the registration experience, dashboard management, navigation through the site and use of different features;
- data organization, management (clear Information Architecture, taxonomy and hierarchy for website, and database; possibility for meta tags and bookmarking);
- powerful search engine;
- your proposed CMS or unique software (provide a rationale and comparison demonstrating why your choice is the best given the requirement of the project, including software updates over 5 years and availability on the market of developers who would be able to provide maintenance services in the future;
- API
- providing for high response and upload/download times for a wide performance range of computers used and for users to see an estimate of download times for different connection speeds for each item that will be available for download on the site;the full integration and use of social media;
- your proposed online collaborating tools to support the work of the BES-Net team, and the development and management of the IPBES modules, and how they connect to the back end of the website;
- how the forum and live chats would be developed and managed;

- the most appropriate feedback tools for the web-platform including for the IPBES catalogue of tools and methodologies;
- the development of a mobile phone website (either stand alone or through responsive web design);
- proposed way to effectively track and respond to the moderation needs of the web-platform and ensure good coordination of a virtual team of administrators;
- proposed web analytics tools;
- duration of the trainings of the BES-Net staff to be able to master all the management of the web-portal without technical assistance;
- hosting (including provider, monthly costs, control panel options, managed server options, redundancy options and backup services);
- security (protection against spams and hacking) and privacy (private user information)

Process, Timeline and working modalities

Please provide a thorough description of the process your firm will follow to achieve this project.
Please describe your management hierarchy and staffing structure and how staff assigned to this project will interact with the BES-Net team. Describe the quality control tools and procedures you will put in place. Define roles and staffing you require from the BES-Net team.

Please also provide the availability of your team during the working hours in Bangkok and your availability to undertake face-to-face meetings with the BES-Net team, face-to-face trainings, and international trips.

Describe the stages and timeline for the design and development of the BES-Net Web Portal your company will follow and have used for projects of a similar scope, including the deliverables for each stage. Please note that flexibility will be required, as the output of the project is a web-platform fully manageable by the BES-Net team and adaptable to fluctuating needs. As the specifications are not yet fully developed for the IPBES components, and timelines not fully decided upon, a certain level of flexibility would be expected from the company and separate costing provided for those.

In the proposal, please also include what additional information you would need from the BES-Net team and potentially end-user to develop the web portal.

Qualifications and Experience
- 10-15 years of professional experience in website and graphic design for development organizations
- •Knowledge of Drupal or Wordpress CMS, HTML, DHML, VB Script or JavaScript and open source languages, of Photoshop, Illustrator, Acrobat, MX Flash, and other graphics applications , Strong logo/property and banner development skills
- Basic knowledge of IPBES (see www.ipbes.net), familiarity with UNDP, experience in working with similar target audiences is an advantage

- Experience in project management

- Extensive experience in analyzing, developing, testing and launching websites

- Ability to work under pressure to meet deadlines, and to undertake problem solving independently while in close coordination with the team.

ANNEX I: THE IPBES CAPACITY-BUILDING MATCHMAKING FACILITY

IPBES will put in place a capacity-building matchmaking facility, with the aim of bringing together those who have capacity building needs with those able to help meet those needs, whether technical or financial.

The matchmaking facility would encompass both face to face enabling activities, such as meetings, donor roundtables, etc.), and an online element that the BES-Net portal is expected to support.

Examples of online matchmaking facilities can be found there:
-The UNCCD MarketPlace:
http://www.unccd.int/en/programmes/Capacity-building/CBW/marketplace/Pages/default.aspx#fellowships
-The LifeWeb: http://lifeweb.cbd.int/explore

IPBES is still refining its thinking on the way each component of the Matchmaking facility will operate but is planning a pilot phase in 2014-2015. The pilot would comprise a fellowship programme, a secondment programme, an exchange programme, a mentoring scheme and a training programme.

More work will be done in 2015 and define the way those activities will be managed,
However, at this stage, and to ensure that the development of the web-portal will cater for the needs of module 3, the following indicative requirements are listed by the BES-Net team:
- a separate visual identity for this module, that would bear the IPBES logo, to reflect the fact that this is an IPBES-led process, following IPBES rules and operating principles;
- different sections for different programmes;
- online support to the announcement of calls to network users -according to their areas of interest- and to new potential users
- online support to receiving application (possibly through an online form) according to eligibility and selection criteria set by IPBES
- a tool to easily gather and export all applications for consideration by IPBES
- an online collaboration tool to support the selection process by IPBES
- support to posting selection results on line
- support to providing feedback to applicants following selection
- a way to visually showcase matches made on the web-portal
- a way for recipients of support to provide feedback

Module 3 would be linked to the other modules and components of the BES-Net web-portal through user profiles and the other modules (for examples, the networking component with an online calendar of events) and to its social media channels.

ANNEX II: THE IPBES CATALOGUE OF POLICY TOOLS AND METHODOLOGIES

Background

There are a wide range of policy support tools and methodologies available for different purposes, at different stages of the policy cycle. However, it is often difficult for decision-makers or practitioners to either access information on policy support tools and methodologies, or to identify how relevant these tools and methodologies might be for them.

The IPBES catalogue is proposed as an innovative, dynamic and evolving online platform with two main goals:
(a)   The first goal is to enable decision makers at all scales to gain easy access to tailored information on policy support tools and methodologies to better inform and assist the different phases of policy making and implementation.
(b)   The second goal is to allow a range of users to input and assess the usability of tools and methodologies in their specific contexts, including resources required and types of outputs that can be obtained, and help identify gaps in tools and methodologies and propose the need to develop new ones.

The goals will be achieved through the development of an online platform designed around IPBES processes and functions, and with a user-focused approach. Rather than being simply a repository of high quality information on available policy support tools and methodologies, the online catalogue will enable decision-makers, practitioners and other social groups, to adopt a step-wise approach to identify the most relevant tools and methodologies with regards to their individual needs. This will require the catalogue to be a dynamic online platform, where stakeholders not only use the catalogue, but can themselves add, suggest and rate policy support tools and methodologies, leading to the improvement of such tools and methodologies, and where decision-makers, practitioners, research scholars and other social groups can interact and build networks with peers. In order to achieve these ambitious and long-term goals, the catalogue should be considered an ongoing and dynamic activity in the context of IPBES. As such the catalogue is thought to serve the needs of a range of social actors, focusing primarily, but not exclusively, on diverse decision-makers and implementing bodies and also information´s providers and brokers. It also provides elements for IPBES to engage in dialogues with other conventions and initiatives with similar visions and complementary mandates about possible synergies on the use and further development of relevant tools and methodologies.

For the purpose of designing these ToR, the BES-Net team has attempted at summarizing the information that will be important in the initial development stages, whilst further work in being conducted to refine specifications and a management model:

- There will be different categories of policy support tools and methodologies and documents, videos, e-learning material need to be shared through the catalogue. On line forms with multiple criteria will be developed to share new tools and methodologies (draft template available)
- There will be different levels of users and contributors: Input will be curated according to four different categories of users according to their capabilities regarding a given type of content (tool list, applications/case studies, resources and/or feedback):
  -Content user. Any registered user that is able to search, see, and make use of any material held in the catalogue.
  - Content proposer. Any user that wants to can propose material to be included in the catalogue. The inclusion of this material may ultimately be decided by a content contributor or a content moderator.
  - Content contributor. Any accredited user that is capable of submitting new material and edit material that has been previously submitted by the same user. Content contributions may be modified by a content moderator.
  - Content moderator. Any user that is entrusted to moderate the material include in a given level of the catalogue. They are allowed to add, delete or modify material in outer levels of the catalogue, and to accredit content contributors. This could be moderated by a "super-administrator".
- An **online collaborative tool**, linked to the back end of the website could be developed to the development of the initial catalogue according to the IPBES processes. It would also be used to review and assess new entries to the catalogue proposed by accredited users, once the initial catalogue is online.
- Allow users to **browse, search and retrieve information on policy support tools and methodologies**;
- Allow users to **collectively provide information and feedback on policy support tools**. This information will be two-fold: content relating to policy support tools (by suggesting new policy support tools that should be integrated into the catalogue, or adding content to existing policy support tools); and experience of policy support tools (share lessons learned from the policy support and methodology). This will include feedback on the context within which the policy support tool was used, the scale of application (both spatial and governance scale) and the history of use of the policy support tool and methodology. Each lesson learned will provide both quantifiable and in-depth and information relating to the policy support tool. Lessons learned will relate to cost-effectiveness; adaptability to different contexts; equity and user-friendliness. To this end, **a forum or an online collaboration tool could be used**.

- **Strengthen networking of users**. Part of the networking function of the catalogue will be to enable users to find peers, and discover the policy support tools they are using in their work. This will allow users to better understand existing tools, and how new tools could be needed or applied in their work.
- **Allow monitoring of the use of the catalogue,** through the use of web analytics tools that will be custom designed for the tool.
- **Be accessible and user-friendly** in order to ensure its use by decision-makers, thereby potentially improving the quality of ensuing decisions.
- **Support ongoing evaluation of the catalogue** for example through online surveys
- **Provide information to the IPBES plenary on** lessons learned and monitoring of the catalogue and use of policy support tools and methodologies.

Overall, the catalogue would require the following specifications

- Creation of user profiles with different access rights
- Personalization of user areas and user dashboard
- Searchable database of users
- Searchable database for content with multiple search criteria
- Language translation
- Thorough user analytics and reporting
- Integrated taxonomy and tagging system (ITTS)
- Feedback tool(s)?
- RSS feed(s)
- Forum(s)/Discussion board(s)
- File sharing
- E-learning module(s)
- Video(s)
- Identification of knowledge gaps
- Contact page
- Online forms for new entries
- Reporting tool

ANNEX III: THE IPBES CATALOGUE OF ASSESSMENTS

IPBES currently manages and hosts a catalogue of assessments: http://catalog.ipbes.net/ that allows for online inputting of information, search, and downloading of an excel spreadsheet to get all the information.

BES-Net could be asked to take the management of this catalogue over and host it on the web-portal.

ANNEX IV: ANALYSIS AND RESULTS OF AN ONLINE SURVEY OF FUTURE WEB-PORTAL USERS (PDF document) (AS PER ANNEX B)

ANNEX V: EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL ONLINE NETWORKING TOOLS highlighted by the future users to consider in the development of the web-portal:

Research Gate: www.researchgate.net/
LifeWatch: http://www.lifewatch.eu/web/guest/home
Swedish Lifewatch: http://www.svenskalifewatch.se/en/
www.deepseaexperts.org
Check the EPBRS Synthetron experience: http://www5.synthetron.com/
http://www.vivoweb.org/
http://chapter.ser.org/europe/knowledge-base/
www.consciousme.com
www.agri-profocus.nl
The UNEP-WCMC Sub-Global Assessment Network website: www.ecosystemassessments.net/
The Mediterranean Ecosystem Services Working Group of the Ecosystem Services Partnership: www.es-partnership.org/esp/80132/5/0/50
Blue Solutions: bluesolutions.info/
Internations: http://www.internations.org

For the matchmaking facility:
The UNCCD MarketPlace:
http://www.unccd.int/en/programmes/Capacity-building/CBW/marketplace/Pages/default.aspx
The CBD LifeWeb website: http://lifeweb.cbd.int/explore

ANNEX VI: DRAFT STRUCTURE OF A USER PROFILE

The following information could be included in a user profile:

- title and name
- contact details
- job title
- organization you work for/participate in (including tick box for potential donors to support matchmaking efforts)
- type of BES actor: policy maker-scientist, practitioner (to further define using the categories of IPBES stakeholders
- technical field(s) of expertise
- geographic area(s) of expertise
- link with IPBES and MEAs
- language(s) spoken
- photograph
- preferences for being contacted (social media, newsletter, email)
- accept or not to be contacted privately by another registered user (if yes, specify email, private message through the web-portal, LinkedIn, etc.)
- willingness to be considered as an expert (tick box)
- willingness to contribute to IPBES processes (such as the catalogue of tools and methodologies for example)(tick boxes)
- are you interested in receiving capacity building support (tick box)
- if one of the boxes are ticked, then a full CV will be required (attachment/from LinkedIn or following a specific format with criteria for selection)
- areas that you would like to follow (options for thematic areas, information and discussion related to a particular country or region)

ANNEX B: ANALYSIS AND RESULTS OF AN ONLINE SURVEY OF FUTURE WEB-PORTAL USERS

Background

At the end of October 2014, during the update of the BES-Net strategy, the BES-Net team – in collaboration with the IPBES Secretariat – conducted a short online survey to learn potential users' preferences for online networking tools and interactive features of the BES-Net web portal. The survey was disseminated through the IPBES contact database, posted on selected social media (targeted Facebook and LinkedIn groups including the IPBES stakeholder forum) and advertised on the IUCN website.

The results of the survey were used to inform the terms of reference for the web portal and are presented in this document.

Analysis of the responses

A detailed summary of the responses is available in annex I.

386 unique responses were received in a week, from all the three user communities of policy, science and practice from the 5 continents, with a majority of scientists/knowledge holders (279).

In summary, a majority of respondents:

- were **very keen on using online tools to connect with other communities** (87% being "very likely" or "likely" to use them);
- were **favorable to sharing a public online profile** (82.6% responded "very likely" or "likely");
- were **open to be a resource person to the network** (89% responded "very likely" or "likely");
- were **happy to be an expert of the week** (57% responded "very likely" or "likely");
- were **willing to share content online with the community** (88% responded "very likely" or "likely");
- were **interested in asking a policy related question in an online forum** (66% responded "very likely" or "likely");
- had **various views in terms of the preferred format for a forum**, with 39 % in favor of a public online forum, moderated by the BES-Net team, where user profiles, questions and answers would be visible to the general public, 30% in favor of a restricted online forum, moderated by the BES-Net team, where your user profile and your questions and answers would only be visible to the network members, and 31% in favor of a LinkedIn type tool where a generic profile would be available to the general public but would cater for group discussions and private messages to other users (31%).
- had no issue with having **an online profile visible to the public** (70% chose the open forum and LinkedIn option with public profiles);
- ranked their willingness to register/join/follow future BES-Net social media as: **newsletter** (86% of "very likely to use" and "likely to use"), **Linked in** (67 %), **Live Chat** (55.2%), **Facebook** (49%- 37% being "Very Unlikely" and "Unlikely" to use it), Twitter (29%-51% being "Very Unlikely" and "Unlikely" to use it), with recognition in the comments that younger people and the general public might be more interested in Facebook and Twitter; and
- **favored emails and newsletters** (88% and 42%) as means of staying informed of the developments of BES-Net. When asked about **other suggestions or the most useful features of online networking tools**, respondents provided a variety of responses, summarized in three categories and available as Annex I.

The analysis of responses also highlighted:

- **The need to better define the three communities of future users** (policy, science and practice), as respondents often identified themselves as belonging more than one category (which reflects the reality but might not be the most helpful in terms of managing the network online), or did not identify themselves as part of one of the communities of users (i.e. coordinators of networks, advocacy organizations and think tanks, private sector, educators and students, advisors to governments, UN organizations, etc.)
- **The need to enhance engagement of the private sector** and in particular of corporations and businesses (only 6 respondents were working in companies)

Conclusions

This was a successful online survey with a very good rate of responses that provided insights into the future BES-Net users' needs and expectations.

The answers to the first questions largely supported the proposal of a BES-Net web portal that would allow users to connect online in order to share information, find resource people and create discussions around specific policy questions.

Based on the responses provided, the web portal will allow the creation of public profiles for users, allowing them to register their interests in specific areas in the field of biodiversity and ecosystem services and follow specific topics on the web portal. Email alerts should be used for notifications. The quality of the user experience will be critical to the success of the portal.

BES-Net should also develop an online forum and consider a live chat.

Newsletters and emails will be the preferred option to inform BES-Net users of the latest developments.

In terms of social media, LinkedIn and Facebook are the preferred channels, whilst Twitter and WhatsApp could be considered as secondary options.

Guidelines for the moderation of the portal and of the forum will be included in the terms of reference for the BES-Net team.

A lot of the suggestions that were made in the open-ended questions tackled other features and functionalities of the web portal such as: online collaboration tools, search tools, sharing content, rosters of experts, feedback tools, translation, e-learning, mobile App, and IPBES catalogue of tools and methodologies. These will be used to further inform the development of the BES-Net web portal, alongside suggestions of best practices and potential partners.

Annex I: Summary of the answers received to the open questions of the survey

Question 7: "Do you have any suggestion for effective online networking tools that would meet your needs? Any examples of useful tools that you would like to share?"

Question 8: "For you, what would be most useful feature in such an online networking tool?"

1. Guidelines for the management of the BES-Net portal

o   Need for good and transparent moderation;
o   Make the best and latest information available;
o   Make it a simple and user friendly process for users, also taking into account their specific topics of interest and cater for this; and
o   Safety of users' information and protection against spam and hacking;

2. Other suggestions for the BES-Net portal and the overall BES-Net strategy

a.   Face to face activities /regional and national networks

o   Face to face networking activities are also needed to complement the online tool, enabling people with limited access to internet to participate in the network;
o   Regional and National Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services networks would be useful;

b.   User experience and management of the network

o   Experts' databases/rosters would be helpful;
o   Users should be able to register their interest for specific topics only and get notification by email relevant only to these topics and or see only forum threads relevant to these topics/their own posts;
o   Users should be allowed to: post documents and other content such as existing blog articles, identify knowledge gaps, provide feedback on specific tools used in policy making;

o   The website should be simple, user friendly and clear in order to optimize contributions and guarantee success;

   c. Information available, information management and search

o   The web-portal should provide a one stop shop to information on BES with links to other sites,
o   A good tagging system and powerful search engine are necessary;
o   An information management schema could be useful;
o   The web-portal should provide access to simplified versions of scientific documents, access to evidence based information and graphics, access to and translation of IPBES products, case studies/success stories, scientific articles with abstracts in PDF format, and basic information on IPBES and on Biodiversity and Ecosystem services;
o   An online calendar of events or Facebook events would be useful;
o   Translations would be helpful

   d. Learning and collaboration

   The web-portal could provide opportunities for:

o   e-learning (RSA animations; live streams of lectures, video conferences, MOOCS, etc.);
o   online collaboration (Etherpad, http://outils-reseaux.org/PagePrincipale, wiki, Google docs, dim dim, MS SharePoint, or Confluence);
o   live debates with links to national media;
o   virtual meetings (through Skype, Telepresence Scopia, Google Hangout, WebEx, GoToMeeting, etc.).

   e. Matchmaking

o   The web-portal should include a matchmaking facility and help advertise jobs and volunteer opportunities

   f. Mobile application and RSS feeds

   BES-Net could also consider:

o   an App for smartphones and tablets
o   an RSS feeds
o   the use of WhatsApp groups

   3. Learn from existing networks and tools, and connect to existing networks (as per list contained in Annex V of Annex A)