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Item 13 of the provisional agenda**

**Institutional arrangements: United Nations collaborative
partnership arrangement for the work of the Platform
and its secretariat****Progress report on the United Nations collaborative partnership
arrangement****Note by the secretariat**

1. In its decision IPBES-2/8, the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) approved the collaborative partnership arrangement to establish an institutional link between the Plenary of IPBES and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as set out in the annex to the decision.
2. In the same decision, the Plenary invited UNEP, UNESCO, FAO and UNDP to approve the collaborative partnership arrangement. In response to that invitation, approval processes were undertaken by each of the four United Nations entities (see IPBES/3/INF/14).
3. The annex to the present note, which is presented without formal editing, sets out a consolidated progress report on the support provided by the four entities to the work of the Platform and its secretariat since the fifth session of the Plenary.

* Reissued for technical reasons on 28 February 2018.

** IPBES/6/1.

Annex

Progress report on the United Nations collaborative partnership arrangement for supporting the work of the Platform and its secretariat

I. Context

1. The collaborative partnership arrangement set out in the annex to decision IPBES-2/8 acknowledges the role of the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in the development and establishment of the Platform, and the relevance of their respective mandates and programmes of work to the functions of the Platform. The aim of the institutional link created between the Platform and these United Nations entities was to provide a collaborative framework whereby:

- (a) the partners coordinate relevant activities and cooperate in areas related to the functions of the Platform;
- (b) dedicated capacity and secondments or otherwise assigned staff are made available by the organizations to support the secretariat of the Platform;
- (c) technical and programmatic support is provided by the organizations to support implementation of the work programme of the Platform;
- (d) joint fundraising is undertaken to enable the activities of the Platform to be implemented; and
- (e) the communications activities of the Platform are supported by the communications capacity of the organizations.

II. Direct support for the secretariat of the Platform

A. Secretariat staff and secondments

2. Consistent with decision IPBES-1/4, the United Nations Environment Programme continues to provide the Platform's secretariat, which is solely accountable to the IPBES Plenary on policy and programmatic matters. In addition, the United Nations Environment Programme has provided since 2014 a dedicated professional programme officer (P4) as an in-kind contribution to the IPBES secretariat. On request, the United Nations Environment Programme continues to provide the support of other staff during meetings of the Plenary, in particular to advise on legal issues.

B. Technical support units and other recognized institutional arrangements

3. IPBES Work Programme Deliverable 1(c): UNESCO continues in its role as the technical support unit for the IPBES task force on indigenous and local knowledge systems. As part of this, UNESCO continues to provide staff time (P5, P3 and G staff) as its agreed contribution (50%) towards the staffing of the technical support unit. Related activities are also described in the following section.

4. IPBES Work Programme Deliverable 2(a): The United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) continues to provide technical and administrative support relating to development of the guide on production and integration of assessments from and across all scales, and to support capacity-building activities relating to the guide. This support is directly funded by the Government of Norway. Related activities are also described in the following section.

5. IPBES Work Programme Deliverables 4(a) and 4(c): UNEP-WCMC is also providing the technical support unit for the expert group working on policy support tools and methodologies. This support is funded in part from the IPBES trust fund, and in part from other resources accessed by UNEP-WCMC. As part of this, UNEP-WCMC is also supporting the catalogue of relevant assessments. Related activities are also described in the following section.

C. Other administrative issues

6. Consistent with decision IPBES-2/7, the United Nations Environment Programme manages a trust fund for the Platform, which has been operational since 2014, and, consistent with decision

IPBES-1/4, the United Nations Environment Programme continues to provide administrative support as necessary in close liaison with the Executive Secretary. The United Nations Environment Programme receives programme support cost from the IPBES trust fund for its administrative services.

III. Support for implementation of the work programme

7. In addition to the technical support described above, the four UN entities have continued to support the implementation of the IPBES work programme as is described in the following paragraphs. For the convenience of the Plenary, the report on this work is organized by work programme objective and deliverable. Beyond the activities described here in direct support of the work programme of the Platform, many other activities carried out by the four UN entities are consistent with and supportive of the objective and activities of the Platform. Some of these are described in a subsequent section.

A. Objective 1: Strengthen the capacity and knowledge foundations of the science-policy interface to implement key functions of the Platform

8. IPBES Work Programme Deliverable 1(a/b): Both UNEP-WCMC and UNDP have actively engaged in the work of the IPBES task force on capacity-building at the request of the task-force co-chairs, contributing resource persons to both the task force meeting and inter-sessional activities through the task groups established by the task force. During 2017-2018 UNEP-WCMC have not been contracted to provide support to the technical support unit as in previous years, but have nonetheless continued to provide informal and in-kind support when requested.

9. UNDP continued to support the capacity building work of the Platform through the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network (BES-Net), a capacity sharing “network of networks” that promotes dialogue among science, policy and practice for more effective management of biodiversity and ecosystem services, contributing to long-term human well-being and sustainable development. BES-Net supports the Platform as an in-kind contribution and facilitates dialogue on themes echoing IPBES thematic assessments, and in key areas of UNDP’s work on biodiversity and ecosystems management. Adopting an inclusive approach, BES-NET also collaborates with relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements, and promotes interaction and knowledge exchange among over 90 partner organizations and other relevant entities. The BES-Net web portal has over 630 registered users from all three target communities of policymakers, scientists/ knowledge holders and practitioners. Among them, some 120 users volunteer to serve as BES-Net experts based on their knowledge, experiences and expertise, providing policy advice, respond to practitioner questions and moderate forums on the web portal.

10. Over the period 2016-2020, the Government of Germany is supporting a project to assist in the development of capacity to address science-policy questions through IPBES, working with BES-Net and the UNEP-WCMC hosted Sub-Global Assessment (SGA) Network (a community of practice amongst ecosystem assessment practitioners). As part of this project, UNDP is working to enhance capacity at the national and regional levels to apply the findings of the IPBES thematic assessments (achieved through the UNDP-managed BES-Net ‘Dialogues’, which bring together scientists, policy-makers and practitioners to address pressing development questions). The role of UNEP-WCMC is to provide technical and capacity-building support to specific countries to conduct nationally-led assessments of scientific evidence on policy issues (and thereby directly addressing one of the capacity-building priorities identified by the Plenary). UNDP and UNEP-WCMC are both seeking additional resources to extend this support to include other countries interested in hosting BES-Net ‘Dialogues’ and/or initiating national ecosystem assessments.

11. IPBES Work Programme Deliverable 1(c): The technical support unit for the task force on indigenous and local knowledge systems, hosted by UNESCO, organized a task force meeting in Pereira, Colombia in May 2017, and continues to provide support and coordination for the task force, including on the development of a methodological guidance to support the IPBES indigenous and local knowledge approach and on the development of the ‘participatory mechanism’ for indigenous and local knowledge. In the context of the IPBES global assessment, the technical support unit helped to coordinate and has attended indigenous and local knowledge dialogues in Kenya (November 2017) and Canada (December 2017), as well as provided reporting on these meetings to IPBES authors. The technical support unit has also provided support to the global assessment on a ‘call for indigenous and local knowledge contributions’. The publication from the Regional Indigenous and Local Knowledge Workshop for the Americas, organised by the technical support unit, has also been finalized.

12. IPBES Work Programme Deliverable 1(d): At the invitation of the co-chairs of the task force on knowledge and data, both UNESCO and UNEP-WCMC are providing resource persons to support

the work of the task force. In the case of UNEP-WCMC, this includes providing support in collating indicator information and data for use in the IPBES regional and global assessments (deliverable 2(b) and 2(c)) working through the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership (for which UNEP-WCMC provides the secretariat), and support in discussions relating to managing and accessing data, information and knowledge (including with respect to implementation of deliverable 4(b)). UNESCO and its Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (see below) have made expertise available to the task force on a variety of issues. In addition, UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme continues contributing to site-level assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services in its World Network of Biosphere Reserves (669 sites in 120 countries). The Lima Action plan adopted at the 4th World Congress of Biosphere Reserves in Lima, Peru (March 2016) makes substantive provision for research and co-production of knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services and stakeholder engagement.

B. Objective 2: Strengthen the science-policy interface on biodiversity and ecosystem services at and across sub-regional, regional and global levels

13. IPBES Work Programme Deliverable 2(a): UNEP-WCMC is continuing to provide technical and logistical support to the secretariat concerning delivery of the guide on production and integration of assessment from and across all scales, and its component modules. UNEP-WCMC's role in doing this is recognized by the secretariat and Bureau, but is supported financially by the Government of Norway. As part of this work, UNEP-WCMC is supporting development of an IPBES core glossary, and capacity-building activities relating to the guide, including preparing an e-learning module on the IPBES assessment process (the latter with funding from the IPBES trust fund).

14. IPBES Work Programme Deliverable 2(b): At the request of the co-chairs and technical support unit of the IPBES regional assessment for Africa, the UNEP-WCMC Chief Scientist has provided support to the technical support unit in a number of areas. In addition, experts from all four United Nations entities have contributed to the review of the second order drafts of the regional assessments. In doing so, UNEP-WCMC and United Nations Environment Programme experts are also working to ensure coherence between IPBES regional assessments and the Global Environment Outlook process.

15. IPBES Work Programme Deliverable 2(c): At the request of experts working on the global assessment, UNEP-WCMC is developing indicator extrapolations to 2020 based on indicators and indicator data made available by members of the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership. This builds on work previously presented in the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook prepared by the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. In addition, experts from all four United Nations entities have contributed to the review of the first order draft of the global assessment. In doing so, UNEP-WCMC and United Nations Environment Programme experts are also working to ensure coherence between IPBES global assessment and the Global Environment Outlook process.

C. Objective 3: Strengthen the science-policy interface on biodiversity and ecosystem services with regard to thematic and methodological issues

16. IPBES Work Programme Deliverable 3(a): UNDP has included the theme of pollination, pollinators and food production within BES-Net, where links are made as appropriate to IPBES resources. In October 2017, in line with IPBES's Thematic Assessment Report on Pollinators, Pollination and Food Production, UNDP and the Bosnia and Herzegovina Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism convened BES-Net's first Regional Trialogue on Pollinators, Food Security and Rural Development in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The BES-Net Trialogues aim to address the current problem of the weak interface between science/traditional knowledge, policy and practice and support the uptake of the completed thematic IPBES assessments across these three sectors. With support from the Open Regional Fund for South-East Europe – Biodiversity, the Trialogue provided a constructive space for participants from five countries in Eastern Europe to learn together, fostering inter-cultural understanding and inter-institutional coordination. The participants identified a set of concrete actions to be implemented in tandem by three sectoral communities at different levels to better address issues concerning pollinators, food production and rural development in the region.

17. To globally coordinate necessary local, national and international actions identified in decision XIII/13 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which supports efforts to address the findings of the IPBES assessment, CBD has requested FAO and CBD Secretariat to develop an updated and streamlined plan of action of the International Initiative on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Pollinators (FAO-IPI). FAO organized a meeting in November 2017 in Rome to discuss the new plan of action. The overall objective of FAO-IPI is to promote coordinated action worldwide to safeguard and promote wild and managed pollinators, and to ensure

and fully utilize the vital ecosystem service of pollination for agricultural production and the functioning and health of ecosystems beyond agriculture, as requested in CBD COP decision XIII/13.

18. Drawing on findings from the assessment, UNEP-WCMC partnered with a number of other organizations to host a workshop on building a business case for corporate engagement on pollination.

19. IPBES Work Programme Deliverable 3(b): FAO supported participation of the Chair of the Inter-Governmental Technical Panel on Soils (ITPS) of the Global Soils Partnership (GSP) in the author meetings for the thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration, in his capacity as co-chair of that assessment. FAO also hosted on 17-21 July 2017, the third author meeting for the thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy. The meeting was attended by 85 participants. A member of UNEP-WCMC staff has supported this assessment as a review editor, and in addition experts from all four United Nations entities have contributed to the review of the second order draft.

20. IPBES Work Programme Deliverable 3(c): Modellers from UNEP-WCMC have continued to work with the technical support unit to support and contribute to the continuing programme of activities on scenarios and models approved by the Plenary in decisions IPBES-4/1 and IPBES-5/1. A member of FAO staff has participated to the Scenarios workshop “new visions for Nature and nature’s contributions to people for the 21st century” and is an author of the report.

21. IPBES Work Programme Deliverable 3(d): In November 2017, UNESCO co-sponsored a workshop on the practical application of nature’s values in Oaxaca, Mexico organized by members of the expert group on values, and another one on bio-cultural diversity with members of the task force on indigenous and local knowledge systems. The workshop benefited from support from the Government of Japan.

D. Objective 4: Communicate and evaluate Platform activities, deliverables, and findings

22. IPBES Work Programme Deliverable 4(a): UNEP-WCMC continues in its role of providing the technical support unit to the expert group working on policy support tools and methodologies. This support has been in place since October 2016 (see IPBES/6/INF/16 for further information), supported in part from the IPBES trust fund. UNEP-WCMC is also able to leverage additional resources to support this work, and, as a member of the team involved in the development of *Oppla*¹ (which is being used as the platform for the prototype catalogue of policy support tools), UNEP-WCMC is well placed to support this work. In addition, a member of the United Nations Environment Programme staff serves as a member of the expert group on policy support tools and methodologies. UNDP also contributed to the review of the prototype online catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies.

23. IPBES Work Programme Deliverable 4(d): BES-Net, through its online and face-to-face channels, supported the IPBES’s communication efforts, promoting the Platform’s work widely and identifying opportunities for network partners and users to engage in various Platform activities. The United Nations Environment Programme is working with the IPBES secretariat on outreach and communication activities. This includes supporting the launch of the major IPBES deliverables. The United Nations Environment Programme has shared global media lists, organisational organigrams, contacts, infographics and images and has included IPBES policy primers and other IPBES news through its quarterly Environmental Governance Updates which are now shared with over 7,500 environmental governance stakeholders. The United Nations Environment Programme regularly shares IPBES news and information through its social media platforms. The United Nations Environment Programme has secured a media monitoring tool which will be available for use by IPBES in 2018.

E. Additional supportive actions directly related to work programme implementation

24. The United Nations Environment Programme supports the Sub-Global Assessment Network, the secretariat of which is provided by UNEP-WCMC. This is a community of practice established to support ecosystem assessment practitioners, and has a particular focus on supporting those carrying out national ecosystem assessments and supporting use of the results. The work of the SGA Network is directly relevant to achievement of the capacity-building priorities approved by the Plenary, and the United Nations Environment Programme and UNEP-WCMC are building on this by facilitating the implementation of national ecosystem assessments in a number of countries to support national decision-making. Additionally, UNEP-WCMC provides the secretariat for the Biodiversity Indicators

¹ <https://oppla.eu/about>

Partnership. This partnership was established to support review of progress in achieving targets set by Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and it is valuable to strive for consistency between biodiversity-relevant indicators used by different intergovernmental processes. Finally, the findings and recommendations emerging from IPBES assessments are also feeding into the Global Environment Outlook process, through the engagement of several experts of UNEP-WCMC and the United Nations Environment Programme as well as several thematic authors working on both processes.

25. FAO hosts the secretariat of the Global Soil Partnership (GSP) and facilitates the implementation of the GSP actions through its regional partnerships and networks. The Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils (ITPS) provides scientific and technical advice on global soil issues. As requested by member countries, FAO facilitated interactions with IPBES in order to forge mutually fruitful cooperative links between ITPS and IPBES on the thematic assessment of land degradation and restoration. ITPS members have actively contributed to the preparation of the report by reviewing the document but also by contributing with content to the different chapters.

26. Through the BES-Net Advisory Committee, UNDP supports identifying and creating synergies in the area of biodiversity and ecosystem services for human well-being and sustainable development. The BES-Net Advisory Committee is composed of the BES-Net donors, the IPBES secretariat, various IPBES groups and bodies (including the technical support unit for the task force on capacity-building), and other resource organizations, such as the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and the SGA Network. The co-chairs of the IPBES task force on capacity-building are kept informed of the Committee's process, and the other UN entities supporting the IPBES process have been invited as observers. In addition to managing BES-Net, UNDP provides technical backstopping on capacity-building, contributing ideas and knowledge to the formulation of the IPBES work programme and its implementation in regions.

27. UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) has mobilized the contribution of the Ocean Biogeographic Information System (OBIS), a free and open-access data holding and sharing facility providing seamless access to over 50 million observations of 120,000 marine species, integrated from over 2,000 databases world-wide. Contribution of relevant data and information under OBIS, as well as of relevant expertise in marine biodiversity and ecosystem service data management, will be instrumental in involving the ocean biodiversity community in IPBES. The OBIS secretariat has been supporting authors of the ocean component of the IPBES global assessment and IPBES Regional assessments (Asian Pacific and Europe and Central Asia) with the development of information products and maps (<http://iobis.org/data/maps/>). Through a project funded by the Flanders Government (Kingdom of Belgium), OBIS has built an information portal with statistics for countries as well as areas beyond national jurisdiction. Furthermore, marine species trend indicators as well as completeness and knowledge gap metrics are in development that could directly feed into the marine components of the IPBES assessments. The 2015 IOC Assembly (148 Member States) encouraged increased participation of IOC in the work of IPBES through OBIS and other relevant IOC programmes (IOC-XXVIII/Dec.6.1). In 2017, OBIS has trained 150 scientists and data managers through seven training courses on marine biodiversity data management and data analysis held in Belgium, Colombia, Ecuador, Malaysia, Mexico and Senegal. These training courses are organized at the Regional Training Centres of IOC's Ocean Teacher Global Academy and are sponsored by the Flanders Government (Kingdom of Belgium).

28. The IOC has also established the Biology and Ecosystems Panel under the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS BioEco) with support from the Australian Institute of Marine Science, the University of Western Australia, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation and the Marine Mammal Commission of the USA. GOOS BioEco is working towards the establishment of a global, coordinated and sustained ocean observing system to monitor the status of and threats to critical marine biological resources and marine ecosystems. GOOS BioEco has adopted a collaborative international approach that will strengthen data sharing and interoperability, in collaboration with OBIS, enhance capacity building, facilitate technology transfer, and increase future management options at all levels of government supporting national, regional and global assessments such as the World Ocean Assessment of the UN Regular Process as well as IPBES. Members of the GOOS BioEco Panel are contributing directly to the IPBES global assessment.

29. Following the invitation by the UN General Assembly and building on its contribution to the preparation phase of the World Ocean Assessment and the implementation of the first assessment, UNESCO-IOC is assisting the Regular Process with regard to the following activities: awareness-raising; the identification of experts for the Pool of Experts; technical and scientific support to the Bureau and the Group of Experts; as well as the organisation of regional workshops. With

regards to the later, IOC co-organised regional workshops for the Caribbean and North Pacific Regions in November 2017. The Outline of the next assessment report will be finalised in March 2017 and synergies with other assessment processes such as IPBES and the IPCC Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere should be pursued.

30. UNESCO organized an International Workshop for government officials of the Asia Pacific Region on the use of IPBES assessment reports for regional and national policy development. The workshop was organized in July 2017 back-to-back with the IPBES Regional Dialogue for the Asia Pacific region in Japan and the Third author meeting for the Asia Pacific regional Assessment in Tokyo, Japan.

IV. Other issues

31. The United Nations Environment Programme continues to work closely with the biodiversity-related conventions and relevant organizations including IPBES, on issues relating to cooperation and synergies in implementation. In doing so the United Nations Environment Programme is responding both to direction provided by the United Nations Environment Assembly in decision 2/17 and to CBD COP decision XIII/24 on cooperation with other conventions and international organizations. Cooperation and synergies in the context of these decisions include the effective use of IPBES and IPBES deliverables by multilateral environmental agreements.
