

## Summary of the Stakeholder Days of the 8th Session of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services: 3-9 June 2021

Stakeholder Days, open to all members, observers, and stakeholders of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), are held in advance of each IPBES plenary session, allowing for in-depth dialogue between the Platform and its stakeholder community. Organized by the Open-ended Network of IPBES Stakeholders (ONet), the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IIFBES), and the IPBES Secretariat, the Stakeholder Days offer a platform for interested organizations and individuals to get updates, discuss, and engage with the work and processes of IPBES.

Prior to the 8th session of IPBES (IPBES-8), the Stakeholder Days took place virtually from 3-9 June. Two plenary sessions opened and closed the meeting; three sessions focused on specific regions, listening, among others, to lessons learned from the IPBES 2018 regional assessments on biodiversity and ecosystem services. These sessions were adjusted to relevant time zones, facilitating participation from all four IPBES regions.

The meeting's deliberations focused on:

- insights, lessons learned, and implementation gaps from the IPBES 2018 regional assessments;
- engagement with early-career researchers;
- capacity building and the work of national and regional networks;
- further engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) in the Platform's work; and
- business engagement, discussing the application of IPBES findings in supply chains as well as the promotion of coalitions with the private sector.

All sessions were highly interactive, offering online participants the opportunity to pose questions to panelists. This brief report provides full coverage of the two plenary sessions; the regional sessions' proceedings are summarized.

### Opening plenary

On Thursday 3 June, Co-Moderators Claire Doole, Claire Doole Communications, and Wanja Dorothy Nyingi, IPBES Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP) Member and National Museums of Kenya, opened the meeting, welcoming all participants.

Pranab Patar, ONet, underscored stakeholders as key to IPBES' implementation, saying ONet aims to be a bridge between the two. He lauded the Stakeholder Days as an opportunity to exchange ideas and knowledge on IPBES' work and reflect on progress since IPBES-7.

Joji Cariño, IIFBES and the Centres of Distinction on Indigenous and Local Knowledge (COD-ILK), spoke on how these networks have been key to disseminating the outcomes of the Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. She noted that while they had increased general awareness of the important role that IPLCs play in the stewardship of biodiversity, there is still

a need for greater inclusion of IPLCs in environmental governance, and stronger legal and policy support. More efforts are also needed to fill the knowledge gaps for the comprehensive inclusion of indigenous and local knowledge (ILK) in the work of IPBES.

Anne Larigauderie, IPBES Executive Secretary, provided an update on IPBES' activities, noting continued work on the impact tracking database, which houses specific examples of the Platform's impact. She said three assessments are underway on: sustainable use of wild species; values; and invasive alien species (IAS). She added work is advancing on two scoping reports on the assessments on the nexus of biodiversity, water, food, health, and climate change, as well as on the determinants of transformative change. She further noted work on the business and biodiversity scoping report, to be presented at IPBES-9.

Larigauderie also highlighted the IPBES 2020 Workshop Report on Biodiversity and Pandemics, as well as the IPBES-Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) co-sponsored Workshop Report on Biodiversity and Climate Change. She said key items to be addressed at IPBES-8 included the aforementioned scoping reports, the work of the five task forces, updates on support on scenarios and models, and the stakeholder engagement strategy.

Responding to questions, Larigauderie said the Global Assessment has helped draw attention to the importance of biodiversity and its far-reaching effects. She added that the human-nature conflict is a reality and must be addressed holistically, and underscored the importance of the nexus assessment in this regard.

Larigauderie further focused on: how IPBES' research is taken up by various governments; the periodicity of global assessments; and furthering engagement with the private sector. She noted that the IPBES plenary will have the opportunity to launch a second global assessment next year, which would be prepared prior to 2030 to assess progress against the many goals set for 2030, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the targets of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

Robert Spaul and Flore Lafaye de Micheaux, IPBES Secretariat, presented on communication and stakeholder engagement. Spaul noted that the focus of IPBES' communication since the last session has been on: promoting uptake of the Global Assessment; launching the IPBES 2020 Workshop Report on Biodiversity and Pandemics; and preparing to launch the IPBES-IPCC Co-Sponsored Workshop Report on Biodiversity and Climate Change. He highlighted a significant increase in the reach of both traditional media, with more than 54,000 articles published in 188 different countries, and social media, with an annual audience growth of more than 60% on all channels. He further focused on activities related to stakeholder engagement, underscoring relevant regional conservation forums organized by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), special stakeholder events, consultations processes, and webinars.

Lafaye de Micheaux presented the process and results of the 2020 IPBES Stakeholder Survey. She highlighted that the questionnaire paid attention to language barriers and stressed that

25% of the respondents did not belong to the conservation and research sectors. Regarding obstacles for further engagement, she said stakeholders prioritized: competing work requirements; lack of clarity on how IPBES works; lack of financial support; and language barriers.

Simone Schiele, IPBES Secretariat, presented an overview of the IPBES work programme. She outlined its six objectives, four of which correspond directly to the functions of IPBES: assessing knowledge; building capacity; strengthening knowledge foundations; supporting policy; communicating and engaging; and improving the Platform's effectiveness.

On assessing knowledge, Schiele cited the various assessments, which are all in various stages of completion, with the business and biodiversity assessment being the most recent to get underway. On building capacity, she highlighted the fellowship programme, hosting webinars for stakeholders, and supporting the uptake of the approved assessments. On strengthening knowledge foundations, she mentioned advanced work on the IPBES data management policy and support to authors for data-related needs.

On strengthening knowledge foundations, Schiele underscored dialogues on the full recognition and inclusion of ILK. On supporting policy, she said ongoing activities include a survey on the use of IPBES assessments in policymaking and workshops to engage the broader scientific modelling community in developing scenarios and models for the Platform.

In the ensuing discussion, Schiele stated that IPBES has provided input on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. She further underscored the strong, active engagement through the stakeholder networks, noting opportunities for furthering civil society participation.

Karen O'Brien, University of Oslo, on behalf of the group of experts that assisted the MEP with producing a scoping document for a future IPBES assessment on transformative change, responded to questions regarding the scoping report. She stressed that the required transformative change is not only an environmental issue, but also a socioeconomic challenge that needs to be addressed. She emphasized it is not too late to address the alarming decline in ecosystem services, but urgent, concerted efforts are required. She underscored that the assessment will be relevant both at the individual and government levels.

Bob Watson, University of East Anglia and former IPBES Chair, focused on the thematic assessment of the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food, and health in the context of climate change (the nexus assessment). On behalf of the group of experts that assisted the MEP with the scoping report on the nexus assessment, Watson outlined that the basic approach is to analyze how biodiversity affects food, water, and human health, and how water and food production use and affect biodiversity, all in the context of climate change. He highlighted the need to transform global economic and financial systems, reducing and eliminating perverse subsidies, and focusing on win-win technologies and practices. He emphasized the need to address potential trade-offs, using the example of bioenergy, which can be beneficial for climate change, but could undermine biodiversity as well as food and water security.

Watson further underscored there is no dichotomy between environmental sustainability and economic growth, and highlighted distributional issues. Expressing his optimism regarding the development of the assessment, he noted it can offer different options to decision makers without being policy prescriptive.

Miguel Fernandez, ONet, and Florence Daguitan, IIFBES, focused on the organization of stakeholders' work related to their opening statement at IPBES-8. Fernandez and Daguitan described a six-stage participatory process, which facilitates the suggestion, prioritization, and incorporation of ideas that will form the stakeholders' opening statement.

IPBES Chair Ana María Hernández Salgar (Colombia) closed the session, highlighting the Stakeholder Days as an open space for discussion to strengthen the work of IPBES and underscoring the importance of all forms of knowledge and practices in this regard.

### **Regional sessions**

All three regional sessions followed the same format, focusing on stakeholder engagement, the work of regional and national platforms, and lessons learned and implementation gaps stemming from the IPBES 2018 regional assessments on biodiversity and ecosystem services. IPBES Chair Hernández Salgar attended all regional meetings, offering insights and opening remarks. Towards the end of each regional session, participants were asked to participate in virtual roundtable discussions, developing the stakeholders' opening statements for IPBES-8.

On Friday, during a session co-moderated by Claire Doole, Claire Doole Communications, and Sherry Pictou, Dalhousie University, Member of the IPBES ILK Task Force, and Member of the Mi'kmaq First Nation, deliberations focused on North, Central, and South America and the Caribbean region.

Cristiana Simão Seixas, Unicamp and Co-Chair of the IPBES 2018 regional assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services for the Americas, offered insights from the assessment. She focused on: knowledge, policy, and implementation gaps; addressing ways to motivate efficient decision making; promoting behavioral change; and transiting from sectoral to integrated management.

Discussing motivations, opportunities and barriers for early-career researchers to further engage with IPBES' work and functions, Andrew Kadykalo, Young Ecosystem Services Specialists (YESS) Network, ONet, presented the results of a study on this issue. Håkon B. Stokland, Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) Network, ONet, and Lelani Maurice Mannetti, IPBES Fellow, added their perspectives, focusing on the challenges and opportunities for early-career researchers from the social sciences and humanities, and the IPBES Fellowship Programme, respectively.

Regarding IPBES regional and national platforms and networks, Natalie Boodram, Caribbean Natural Resources Institute, addressed the national platform of Grenada, focusing on stakeholder engagement activities. Ricardo Rozzi, University of Magallanes, University of North Texas, and Institute of Ecology and Biodiversity, focused on the Chilean national platform, underscoring, among others, work on the methodological assessment on values of nature and related benefits. Marcella Ohira, Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI), offered insights regarding building regional capacities and networks.

On IPLC engagement, Viviana Figueroa, IIFB, Indigenous Women's Biodiversity Network (IWB), and Member of the ILK Task Force, focused on IPBES' messages regarding indigenous peoples' empowerment at the national and international levels. Yesenia Hernández Márquez, ILK Focal Point, Mexico, highlighted opportunities to empower IPLCs at the local level.

On Monday, participants focused on Asia and the Pacific in a session co-moderated by Claire Doole and Teina Mackenzie, Te Ipukarea Society, ONet.

Sonali Senaratna Sellamuttu, International Water Management Institute (IWMI), and Co-Chair of the IPBES 2018 regional assessment for Asia and the Pacific, provided an overview of the assessment, underscoring the importance of ecosystem services for the region. She highlighted direct and indirect drivers of change and biodiversity loss, and focused on knowledge gaps, including the need to hear more local voices.

Hyeonju Ryu, YESS Network, ONet, presented the results of the study on motivations, barriers, and opportunities for early-career researchers to get involved with the IPBES network. Håkon B.



Stokland, SSH Network, ONet, and Evonne Yiu, IPBES Fellow, provided their perspectives on challenges and opportunities for engaging with IPBES functions.

Yasuo Takahashi, Institute for Global Environment Strategies (IGES), and Clarissa Arida, ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), focused on regional and national platforms and networks. Takahashi highlighted engagement with different audiences, including business, media, and the public. Arida outlined ACB programmes of work on IPBES-related activities, including workshops and research studies, and work on capacity building and biodiversity mainstreaming.

Regarding engagement of IPLCs, Joji Cariño, IIFBES and COD-ILK, moderated a panel discussion. Florence Daguitan, IIFBES, underscored the results of the work of IPLCs on IAS following the relevant assessment. Prasert Trakansuphakon, Pgakenyaw Association for Sustainable Development, focused on the dialogue across indigenous, local, and scientific knowledge systems, as reflected in the IPBES Assessment on Pollinators.

Tuesday's session, co-moderated by Claire Doole and Wanja Dorothy Nyingi, IPBES MEP and National Museums of Kenya, focused on Africa, Europe, and Central Asia.

Emma Archer, University of Pretoria, Co-Chair of the IPBES 2018 regional assessment for Africa, provided an outline of the biodiversity status on the African continent, stressing that nature's contributions to human well-being are insufficiently accounted for, and underscoring implementation gaps.

Markus Fischer, University of Bern, Co-Chair of the IPBES 2018 regional assessment for Europe and Central Asia, highlighted the region's large ecological footprint, focusing on knowledge gaps regarding issues such as geographical variation, loss of ILK, and the indirect drivers of biodiversity loss.

In the ensuing discussion, the Co-Chairs responded to questions on: implementation gaps; data deficiencies; ways to communicate the assessments' results to policy makers; ways to address environmentally unsustainable practices; population growth as an indirect driver of biodiversity loss; and intergenerational behavioral change.

Regarding engaging with IPBES functions, Carla Washbourne, YESS Network, ONet, focused on the findings of the research on the motivations, barriers, and opportunities for early-career researchers to get involved with IPBES work. Håkon B. Stokland, SSH Network, ONet, and Lelani Maurice Mannetti, IPBES Fellow, shared insights, knowledge, and motivations regarding closer cooperation with IPBES.

On regional and national science-policy platforms, Cecilia Lindblad, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, and IPBES national focal point, outlined reports and initiatives of the Swedish Scientific Council for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, in collaboration with IPBES and the Convention on Biological Diversity. Sié Sylvestre Da, West African Science Service Center on Climate Change and Adapted Land Use (WASCAL), and West African Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services (WABES), presented various aspects of the WABES programme, including efforts on: capacity building; increasing uptake of IPBES' work; stakeholder engagement; and communications across West Africa.

Regarding the engagement of IPLCs in regional and national platforms, Lucy Mullenke, IIFBES, underscored IPLCs' work on biodiversity conservation and the importance of ILK. Simon Mitambo, African Biodiversity Network, highlighted work related to community ecological governance, including reviving ILK and relevant practices. Gathuru Mburu, Ngaatho Community Foundation, focused on mobilizing ILK. He outlined the role of the national policy environment, addressed main strategies for reviving and strengthening respect for the planet and agroecological practices, and presented co-management initiatives regarding ecosystem governance.

### *Closing plenary*

The closing plenary of the IPBES Stakeholder Days was co-moderated by Claire Doole, Claire Doole Communications, and Eva Spehn, Swiss Academy of Sciences.

Offering opening remarks, IPBES Chair Ana María Hernández Salgar highlighted the stakeholders' contributions during the meeting, emphasizing the need to take into account all sources of knowledge and channel these contributions to the IPBES plenary.

Providing feedback from the regional sessions, Sarah Banda-Genchev, UN Convention to Combat Desertification and former member of the IPBES Secretariat, provided an overview of the deliberations during the Stakeholder Days. She emphasized the sessions were highly interactive, focusing on knowledge and implementation gaps to motivate efficient decision making. She welcomed the focus on early-career researchers and called for further stakeholder engagement in a coordinated manner. She offered examples of national and regional platforms and networks working with IPBES, stressing the need to strengthen similar efforts. Banda-Genchev further highlighted the engagement of IPLCs in the assessments.

Florence Daguitan, IIFBES, underscored that IPLCs have been able to directly participate in developing the IPBES assessments, stressing the Platform has created a pathway for including ILK. She highlighted obstacles for further engagements, including cases of discrimination against ILK and inequalities of access to resources.

Paola Fontanella Pisa, YESS Network, ONet, noted the discussions during the Stakeholder Days made clear that all stakeholders play a critical role in implementing the assessments. She also: called for increased diversity of participating stakeholders; welcomed youth participation and the focus on early-career researchers; highlighted the participatory crafting of the stakeholders' opening statements to the IPBES plenary; and noted that the exceptional modalities of this virtual meeting ultimately allowed for additional inclusivity and accessibility.

Spehn opened the panel session on IPLCs and IPBES functions. She asked the panelists to elaborate on their experiences with participating in IPBES, its strengths and potential improvements.

Joji Cariño, IIFBES and COD-ILK, said the Platform has promoted innovative ways to engage with IPLCs, allowing them to provide input into IPBES' work. She reaffirmed that IPBES is stimulating ILK holders and networks to step up their efforts to strengthen, revitalize, and share their knowledge to solve problems locally and globally. She lamented that more IPLCs wish to be engaged and urged for more funding as well as greater grassroots support.

Viviana Figueroa, IIFBES, IWBAN, and Member of the ILK Task Force, said IPBES has offered a specific space for IPLCs to contribute to and be involved in the work of the Platform. She underscored that dialogues have been sincere and open, allowing different knowledge systems to be incorporated in assessments. She further noted that disseminating the assessments globally means local knowledge can be part of the global agenda. Figueroa said there are language barriers that need to be addressed for IPLC engagement to be strengthened and improved. She also urged for more financial and technical support for IPLCs to conduct their own research and assessments.

Sherry Pictou, Dalhousie University, Member of the ILK Task Force, and Member of the Mi'kmaq First Nation, lauded the Platform for respecting and implementing the principle of free, prior, and informed consent in their engagement with IPLCs. She noted challenges relating to engagement include: effectively using transdisciplinary approaches, including through bridging natural and social sciences, which is fundamentally important for IPLCs; and addressing the SDGs, given that only a few of them specifically mention IPLCs, but all of the SDGs are relevant to IPLCs.

Peter Bates, IPBES Secretariat, outlined steps to further strengthen engagement with IPLCs and the use of ILK. In the context of assessments, he pointed to knowledge gaps and stated the data management policy is being further developed to incorporate ILK in a respectful and appropriate manner. Bates recognized that language is a barrier, noting the Secretariat is exploring ways to facilitate dialogues in French and Spanish, in addition to English, but limitations remain. He also said future work will include connecting IPLCs with policy makers.

In the ensuing discussion, Yesenia Hernández Márquez, IIFBES, shared experiences from Mexico, highlighting the role of IPLCs, and calling for further reinforcing links and strengthening relevant dialogues. She underscored that IPLCs always take care of nature as an ethical commitment towards the planet. Lucy Mulenkei, IIFBES, emphasized the interconnections between biodiversity loss, food and water systems, and climate change, calling for an integrated approach. She reaffirmed the importance of ILK and emphasized it is related to science and contributes directly to IPBES' work. Judith Fisher, Fisher Research Pty Ltd and University of Western Australia, highlighted the evolution of the process, noting indigenous peoples that do not belong to specific networks should also be given the opportunity to engage.

Panelists responded to questions on: mainstreaming ILK and ensuring it is respected; experiences from projects reconciling academic disciplines and ILK; and ways for national focal points and platforms to further assist in engaging IPLCs.

The next section of the closing plenary focused on widening engagement with business. A discussion moderated by Sonia Gueorguiev, IPBES Secretariat, focused on examples from supply chain actors.

Jennie Granstrom, H&M, noted that IPBES' work offers the foundation for the company's work and emphasized that a science base increases a company's credibility. She stressed the private sector wants to be a part of the solution, underscoring that IPBES' findings promote sustainability in the fashion industry.

Helen Crowley, Kering, underscored the importance of using science to underpin decisions in complex supply chains. She emphasized that the IPBES Global Assessment changed the narrative in corporate responsibility, with many businesses focusing on restoration and regeneration rather than "only doing less bad."

Pauline Nantongo Kalunda, Ecotrust, noted that IPBES provides the science behind the models used for business-related decisions, stressing spaces of interaction between humans and biodiversity.

In the ensuing discussion, panelists and participants exchanged ideas on: ways to verify raw materials are sustainably sourced; understanding common benefits and risks for biodiversity and the private sector; and better taking into account the interests of smallholders. Panelists further highlighted: regenerative farming; the need to shift business models towards circularity; and the fact that the supply chain transformation will require a grasp of the complexity of these issues as well as long-term commitment.

Furthering the discussion on business involvement, Florence Curet, IUCN Science and Economic Knowledge Unit, presented on the report "Catalysing State and non-State actors for nature," which maps coalitions and their potential contribution to reducing pressures on biodiversity. She said the report found biodiversity is poorly mainstreamed in the private sector, but suggested that voluntary certification schemes do provide a space to encourage mainstreaming. Gaps, she said, include monitoring, reporting, and verification by the private sector.

Rijit Sengupta, Centre for Responsible Business, India, said the Global Assessment underlines that palm oil's contribution to biodiversity loss is significant. He spoke on the Sustainable Palm Oil Coalition, which aims to promote sustainable consumption and trade of palm oil in India throughout the value supply chain. He said lessons learned include: coalitions must have a purpose and a well-laid out structure and vision; traditional methods for supply

chains may not work in a South-South collaboration; a systems lens can help include those actors who would otherwise be excluded from traditional supply chain dialogues; and the dialogue should be balanced and inclusive, and all perspectives should be considered.

Eva Zabey, Business for Nature Coalition, stated the Coalition's aim is to provide a unified voice from the business sector that calls on policy makers to raise the level of ambition and action to reverse biodiversity loss. She said IPBES plays a role in providing the credibility and scientific authority on biodiversity loss for business stakeholders, but lamented a continuing lack of awareness on the scale of the issue. IPBES' role, she noted, could include simplifying the drivers of biodiversity loss for the business sector, and continuing to work with partners and other coalitions on business-related targets and goals that are actionable and implementable.

Mark Gough, Capitals Coalitions, urged making issues around biodiversity loss more accessible, underscoring this does not necessarily equate to simplifying them. He noted a proliferation in approaches and metrics for biodiversity loss over the last few years, stating that simplifying and unifying these allows businesses to apply them in their daily business decisions, making them more sustainable.

In the ensuing discussion, participants addressed a variety of issues, such as ways to ensure businesses take the value of nature into account in their everyday actions; the use of microplastics and microfibers in the textile industry; encouraging a greater understanding of the relevance of biodiversity in the private sector; and the role coalitions can play to promote understanding of the issues and be repositories of knowledge.

Sonja Gueorguiev, IPBES Secretariat, concluded the session, stating IPBES can play a role in enabling businesses to understand the impact of their operations on biodiversity.

Miguel Fernandez, ONet, and Florence Daguitan, IIFBES, invited participants to continue work, finalizing the stakeholders' opening statements for IPBES-8.

Co-Moderator Spehn provided an overview of the Stakeholder Days deliberations, highlighting stakeholders' participation, engagement, commitment, and beneficial role for IPBES' work. She closed the meeting at 3.30 pm CEST.

## Glossary

COD-ILK	Centres of Distinction on Indigenous and Local Knowledge
IAS	Invasive Alien Species
IIFBES	International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
ILK	Indigenous and Local Knowledge
IPBES	Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IPLCs	Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
IWBN	Indigenous Women's Biodiversity Network
MEP	Multidisciplinary Expert Panel
ONet	Open-ended Network of IPBES Stakeholders
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SSH Network	Social Sciences and Humanities Network
WABES	West African Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services
YESS Network	Young Ecosystem Services Specialists Network