



Review Report

Midterm review under the rolling work programme up to 2030 of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

Final

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Midterm review under the rolling work programme up to 2030 of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Term / Meaning
AI	Artificial intelligence
BES-Net	Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network (UNDP-led, referenced for outreach/capacity)
CA / CAs	Contributing author(s)
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CLA / CLAs	Coordinating lead author(s)
CMS	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
COP	Conference of the Parties (e.g., CBD COP-16, COP-19)
ERM	Enterprise risk management (referenced in the section on the secretariat)
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GBF	Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
GEO	Global Environment Outlook (UNEP)
GIS	Geographic information system(s)
IIFBES	International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
ILK	Indigenous and local knowledge
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPLC	Indigenous Peoples and local communities
LA / LAs	Lead author(s)
MEA / MEAs	Multilateral environmental agreement(s)
MEP	Multidisciplinary Expert Panel
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NFF	Nature Futures Framework
NFP / NFPs	national focal point(s)
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
ONet	Open-ended Network of IPBES Stakeholders
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (of the CBD)
SPI	Science-Policy Interface (used here in the context of UNCCD's SPI)
SPM / SPMs	Summary(ies) for policymakers
TF / TFs	Task force(s)
ToR	Terms of reference
TRACK	IPBES impact tracking database (often referred to as "TRACK")
TSU / TSUs	Technical support unit(s)
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP-WCMC	United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Executive Summary

Part 1: Summary of Key Findings

The work of the review panel, conducted between March and October 2025, draws on literature and document analysis, the report on the internal part of the review,¹ observation of meetings, an online survey with 195 responses and inputs from over 110 stakeholders through interviews and focus group discussions, including members of the Bureau, Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, task forces, technical support units and the secretariat; assessment authors; Indigenous and local knowledge holders; IPBES national focal points; and representatives of the secretariats of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements. The review assessed the effectiveness, efficiency and coherence of IPBES structures and processes. The key findings are summarized below.

1. Scientific credibility of the Platform, diverse knowledge systems, technical advances and legitimacy

IPBES has consistently demonstrated its scientific independence and credibility in the implementation of the deliverables of its rolling work programme up to 2030, in particular through a rigorous assessment process that involves scientists and other experts from diverse research fields. A key distinguishing feature is the integration of diverse knowledge systems, particularly Indigenous and local knowledge, into its assessments as well as into other deliverables of its work programme. That significantly enhances the comprehensiveness and inclusiveness of its products, which in turn support their reach. Since its establishment, IPBES has successfully produced a broad range of extensive, non-prescriptive and policy-relevant assessment reports, overcoming limited time frames, an unstable funding base and other resource constraints. In order to continue to ensure the credibility and impact of the Platform's findings, it is crucial that the highest standards of scientific integrity continue to be upheld, including during deliberations of the Plenary. Rapid technical and societal changes, such as those related to artificial intelligence, data management methods, and social media, pose both opportunities for, and challenges to, IPBES processes, requiring continuous review and response, and access to cutting-edge expertise. Concerns were raised about the conducting of fast-track assessments with shortened timelines and fewer review opportunities, suggesting that further consideration of those processes may be required. There were also concerns about equitable and timely participation in all IPBES processes and products, with some notable representational imbalances in relation to scientific disciplines, knowledge systems, regions and subregions, and gender. Furthermore, as the uptake in decision-making of IPBES work and products depends on a network of specialized groups and national partners, which we may call the "IPBES system components", any imbalance between those components propagates to the performance, output and overall reputation of IPBES.

¹ IPBES/11/INF/22.

2. Challenges in policy uptake

IPBES is very successful in generating acclaimed and credible scientific products, supported by high quality communication materials and media handling. However, more should be done to ensure policy relevance and specificity and thereby improve uptake by governments and other decision makers at international and national levels. Some users have reflected on the need for more effective translation and contextualization of IPBES products for specific audiences at the national, regional and global levels, including the multilateral environmental agreements that are key users of IPBES products. National users may lack the dedicated capacity, in terms of both training and personnel, to undertake their own synthesis related to national contexts. Products with little local involvement could make the result less appealing to local actors and thus harder to assimilate and act upon. In that context, IPBES may need to strengthen its role in catalysing derivative products and associated multi stakeholder communications suited to national and regional contexts to better support countries, regions and subregions, as needed, and to ensure that information reaches all relevant audiences effectively. Hence, gaining a better understanding of policy uptake and impacts is crucial to the further evolution of IPBES products and to attracting a secure funding base to sustain the Platform. Greater alignment between the timelines of IPBES assessments and the decision-making cycles of key policy conventions, frameworks and processes would be of benefit.

3. Effectiveness and coordination of Platform subsidiary bodies

To effectively manage complex and often interrelated IPBES processes and tasks, provide leadership and ensure coherence across activities, the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel require sufficient time and resources, skills and experience tailored to the work programme, and streamlined procedures. In particular, the work of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel is crucial for maintaining the scientific credibility of IPBES. It has a sensitive role in the selection, support and guidance of authors and other experts. Its multidisciplinary nature and ability to ensure continuity in the implementation of IPBES scientific and associated technical processes are vital for successfully integrating expertise from the natural and social sciences and humanities, as well as for the incorporation of diverse knowledge systems, including Indigenous and local knowledge. The Bureau plays a fundamental role in balancing the work programme, ensuring regional representation and institutional coordination, and overseeing IPBES fundraising, communication and outreach activities.

The secretariat, including technical support units, was found to be highly effective at coordinating multiple activities under continuous time pressure. However, some issues of leadership, communication and coordination were highlighted regarding the integrated delivery of the four IPBES functions – assessing knowledge, capacity-building, data and knowledge management, and policy support – and their task forces.

Managing concurrent assessment processes places particular stress on all component bodies of IPBES as well as national focal points.

4. Inclusive engagement of experts, stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples and local communities, youth and women from all regions

IPBES is lauded for its commitment to incorporating diverse knowledge systems and views into its deliverables, specifically the assessment processes, and the findings reflect both the success

and challenges in ensuring inclusive engagement. The inclusion of Indigenous and local knowledge, through the work of the dedicated task force and technical support unit, has been a major success. However, the need remains to ensure the equitable participation of women and youth as well as Indigenous Peoples and local communities across all regions to bring diverse perspectives to the assessment processes and other IPBES activities. Women remain underrepresented among members of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau. Furthermore, despite significant efforts, geographical imbalances were perceived to persist in the selection of experts for various IPBES deliverables, with developing countries often more poorly represented. This also links to an imbalance in access to knowledge about IPBES and its functions and activities that are relevant to developing countries.

Part 2: Recommendations

Building on the findings, the review panel developed a set of 35 summary recommendations. While recognizing the overall view that IPBES has become a significant and effective international science-policy interface, the recommendations are designed to support continuous improvement of the Platform.

The full report of the external review presents a number of possible, non-exhaustive implementation options for each summary recommendation, as well as the main actors that would be involved in their implementation. Furthermore, the full report shows how the recommendations are interconnected across the functions and bodies of IPBES. The Plenary may wish to request the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel to develop an action plan in response to the recommendations, outlining actions, time frames, responsibilities and budgetary implications, to account for all the nuances observed, for further consideration by the Plenary.

Drawing on the expert judgement of the review panel, 11 recommendations were prioritized as having the greatest potential to enhance the overall effectiveness of the Platform. Most of these recommendations concern systemic aspects regarding the ways in which IPBES works. Addressing these recommendations will provide an enabling environment for operationalizing other recommendations. The priority recommendations can be grouped into two broad categories: those addressing systemic matters and those focused on ensuring a more equitable and policy-relevant assessment process.

Systemic priority recommendations emphasize strengthening the capacity and broadening the diversity of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (recommendation 6); reinforcing informal and regional preparatory processes for the Plenary (4); enhancing the capacity of national focal points while promoting equitable participation (11 and 34, respectively); strengthening collaboration with other entities (12); and bridging the finance gap through a proactive and diversified fundraising strategy (31).

Priority recommendations addressing a more equitable and policy-relevant assessment process emphasize improving the scoping and planning of the assessments (13); broadening the diversity of experts involved (14); enhancing the policy relevance of assessments (17); strengthening the policy support function across all areas of IPBES work (24); and ensuring that the rolling work programme remains strategic, balanced and adaptive to emerging issues while consolidating existing deliverables (35).

The panel also recognizes the ongoing efforts of the Platform to monitor and improve its functions, consistent with objective 6 of the rolling work programme, and offers recommendations to help develop a more integrated monitoring and evaluation framework (28).

The panel took note of many valuable discussions on the future IPBES work programme; however, it was beyond the mandate of the panel to make recommendations on possible themes and emphases in the future work programme.

The summary recommendations, with priority recommendations indicated with asterisks, are listed below.

Plenary Sessions

- R01 Uphold the scientific integrity of IPBES processes and assessments during sessions of the IPBES Plenary, allowing inclusive deliberations and efficient proceedings.
- R02 Enhance Plenary oversight of all the deliverables of the rolling work programme by ensuring full consideration of all agenda items during sessions of the Plenary.
- R03 Enable effective participation of small delegations, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, fellows and youth in Plenary sessions and avoid timing conflicts with other international events.
- R04 Ensure that timely, informal pre-session consultations, regional preparatory processes, and structured dialogues are available across time zones to allow IPBES members, stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples and local communities and youth, assessment authors, and fellows to engage effectively ahead of sessions of the Plenary.

MEP, Bureau, national focal points and external partners

- R05 Strengthen the role of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel in promoting scientific integrity and coherence across all the objectives of IPBES, while also engaging with the scientific community and other knowledge holders that are external to IPBES.
- R06 Ensure that the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel is diverse in terms of discipline and gender, as well as regionally balanced, with expertise that is well aligned to the IPBES rolling work programme, and that it provides clear guidance and uses existing procedures transparently to promote continuity, multidisciplinary, and readiness for the tasks required.
- R07 Strengthen Multidisciplinary Expert Panel capabilities by mobilizing additional expertise across IPBES and engaging with external partners.
- R08 Manage the workload of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel more strategically by sequencing tasks, clarifying responsibilities and providing targeted support, so that members can sustain high-quality contributions across assessments, Plenary processes and emerging needs.

- R09 Foster deeper discussions, balanced participation and improved coordination with observers during Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and Bureau meetings to provide strategic direction to the implementation of the work programme.
- R10 Further develop and provide induction, training and targeted support to enable Bureau members to fulfil their leadership, administrative, financial and representational responsibilities consistently and credibly.
- R11 Strengthen the role of national focal points as core actors in IPBES, by ensuring that they are well informed, adequately supported by IPBES and enabled to engage with experts, stakeholders and diverse knowledge systems.
- R12 Enhance the opportunities for collaboration with United Nations strategic partners, relevant multilateral environmental agreements and other international science-policy interfaces to align programmes, share information and tools, and secure the uptake of IPBES products.

Assessing knowledge (Objective 1)

- R13 Further improve the scoping and planning of assessments, ensuring geographical and disciplinary balance of experts, including engagement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and the intended policy users, considering the coherence of internal support arrangements for the assessment, and promoting open and transparent review.
- R14 Give further attention to achieving multidisciplinary and regional and gender balance when nominating and selecting assessment authors. Ensure that all types of expertise and knowledge needed for the assessment are represented through inclusive and transparent selection and gap filling, avoiding any systemic or unintended bias, recognizing the diversity of expertise and experiences to be considered. In particular, attention should be given to the representation of regions and subregions, relevant scientific disciplines, Indigenous and local knowledge, as well as that of other knowledge systems, and policy practitioners.
- R15 Ensure that all experts are fully engaged and equipped to perform effectively within the teams of assessment authors and review editors by the provision of mentoring, training and capacity-building, as necessary, in consultation with the capacity-building, data and knowledge management, and scenarios and modelling task forces and with the support of the dedicated technical support units, as appropriate.
- R16 Improve the ease and transparency of assessment review procedures through the adoption of new tools and frameworks.
- R17 Address policy relevance and effectively collaborate with policy customers at all stages of the assessment process, from scoping and literature review to authorship of individual assessment chapters, formulation of the summary for policymakers, external peer review, adoption by the Plenary, and communications, as well as in post-assessment processes such as outreach, support for policy uptake and evaluation of

impacts. Design and structure the summary for policymakers, fact sheets, and briefing papers for policy audiences using appropriate language and concepts, addressing specific policy needs and questions.

- R18 Ensure that effective and tailored technical support is available to the assessment author teams through all stages of the assessment process from start-up to outreach and policy uptake. Efforts should be made to avoid delays in setting up assessment technical support units and loss of support and institutional memory of technical support units when assessments are completed.

Capacity-building, data and knowledge management and policy support (Objectives 2, 3 & 4)

- R19 Further improve the coherence and delivery of IPBES work programme objectives 2, 3 and 4 (building capacity, strengthening the knowledge foundations and supporting policy) by strengthening leadership and liaison roles, enhancing communications and cross-functional services, securing predictable resources and aligning work plans with those resources.
- R20 Further strengthen the capacity-building function (objective 2), broadening engagement, enabling effective participation in IPBES processes across all regions and subregions, enabling more efficient, effective and inclusive IPBES Plenary sessions and enabling the uptake and use of IPBES products by IPBES members and stakeholders at national and regional levels. Collaborate closely with assessment technical support units and the task forces and technical support unit for Indigenous and local knowledge, policy support, and scenarios and models, as well as external partners, including United Nations strategic partners and multilateral environmental agreements with similar needs.
- R21 Ensure that the internal working arrangements of the task force on data and knowledge management (objective 3 (a)) are effective in enabling information exchange and supporting coherent and synergistic collaboration across IPBES functions. The task force and the dedicated technical support unit should undertake continuous scans and technical reviews on technical advances and, where necessary, develop further guidance on advances in data management and analysis methods and tools to inform and streamline relevant processes in IPBES, particularly in ongoing assessments. Additional invited experts/resource persons could help the task force to consider new technologies and data management systems, across the full scope of IPBES activities.
- R22 Enhance the knowledge generation catalysis function (objective 3 (a)) and invite the Bureau to review the current working arrangements for direct oversight by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau, with support from the recently established technical support unit, before the next Plenary session, addressing the following matters: the resources available to the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel to undertake the work; the connections with the task force on data and knowledge management; and collaboration with United Nations strategic partners, relevant

multilateral environmental agreements, and science-policy platforms, other international bodies and knowledge holders with a role in knowledge generation.

R23 Strengthen recognition and integration of Indigenous and local knowledge and diverse knowledge systems (objective 3 (b)) in all IPBES processes, embed Indigenous and local knowledge early and consistently into assessments and further improve institutional arrangements to support the effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

R24 Strengthen the policy support function (objective 4 (a)) by improving engagement with key policy users at global levels (e.g., the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa); promoting informal policy dialogues with IPBES members and other stakeholders at regional levels; defining clearer roles and increasing collaboration and co-delivery with assessment author teams, expert task forces and technical support units; and developing and implementing methods for evaluation of policy impacts of IPBES assessments. Invite the Bureau to further consider working arrangements for delivery of the function, including consideration of an ad hoc policy expert group, and/or policy/practice-oriented workshops linked to specific assessments and other products, and/or re-establishment of a policy support task force.

R25 Provide advice and support on appropriate and consistent use of scenarios and models (objective 4 (b)) in IPBES assessments, including the use of the Nature Futures Framework, with a stronger policy and practical orientation of the work of the task force on scenarios and models supporting uptake and application in policy and decision-making, including in relation to the Convention on Biological Diversity and other relevant multilateral environmental agreements. Explore opportunities for collaboration with other bodies that develop or use relevant scenarios and models to ensure synergies, promote consistency and avoid duplication.

Communications

R26 Streamline communications across and between all elements of the IPBES work programme, all IPBES bodies, strategic partners, national focal points and stakeholders so that communications are more effective at promoting engagement across the network and avoid information overload.

R27 Further orientate, design and target external communications towards specific policy audiences and actors at global, regional and national levels with a view to informing their decisions and raising the profile of IPBES.

Monitoring and evaluation

R28 Establish a structured and participatory monitoring and evaluation framework to enable the Plenary to regularly assess the performance and impact of IPBES activities across

all components, including assessments, task forces, technical support units and stakeholder engagement, using a logic model and clear indicators that capture both outputs and outcomes. This framework should enable adaptive learning, improve coordination and transparency across IPBES functions and ensure that lessons from assessments and outreach efforts systematically inform continuous improvement of the Platform's effectiveness.

- R29 In planning for the final review of the current rolling work programme and reviews of future IPBES work programmes, establish the external review panel earlier in the review cycle (to cover a session of the Plenary and full intersessional period), to allow for a fuller period of engagement and observation, enabling interaction between the internal and external components of review and avoiding duplication in gathering information, and ensuring that results from the monitoring and evaluation framework are available to those conducting the review process.

Finance, planning, and efficiency

- R30 Implement flexible, modern and efficient procurement systems to meet the needs of IPBES.

- R31 Vigorously pursue a structured and proactive fundraising strategy that broadens the donor base beyond the current limited set of contributors. Make efforts to increase the number of IPBES members making regular funding contributions and the amount of funding provided. Further promote opportunities for in-kind contributions and provide full recognition of such offers. Pursue funding contributions from the private sector, ensuring that clear safeguards are in place to protect scientific independence and prevent conflicts of interest.

- R32 Ensure transparency in the information on the budget provided to delegations attending sessions of the Plenary and provide updates to the Plenary on ongoing budget discussions to help all participants to engage. In addition, consider providing high-level financial performance updates during the intersessional period to improve transparency and accountability, build trust among donors and stakeholders, and demonstrate the efficiency and impact of IPBES operations.

- R33 Ensure that the Plenary prioritizes elements of the rolling work programme and balances the ambition of the work programme with the available budgetary resources (and capacity), looking beyond the two-year budget time frame. Strategically manage elements of the work programme, including the number of concurrent assessments and the interval between sessions of the Plenary, to ensure the quality of the work undertaken by IPBES is maintained and to avoid operational bottlenecks and uneven or unsustainable workloads.

- R34 Ensure and enhance the effectiveness and legitimacy of IPBES processes and products when proposing and approving the budget, by taking account of the need for financial provisions for equitable participation and greater inclusivity, while also recognizing the value of face-to-face meetings.

- R35 Ensure that the rolling work programme remains strategic, balanced and adaptive to emerging issues while consolidating existing deliverables and strengthening policy

uptake. To maintain flexibility and scientific credibility amid shifting global contexts, IPBES should diversify its processes and products, including workshops, technical and synthesis reports and fact sheets to reach and engage different audiences; undertake a review of fast-track assessment procedures; and address emerging issues and futures within the scope of its work on assessments, capacity-building, knowledge and data management and scenarios and models, as appropriate.

Part 3: Conclusion

The review process benefited from strong engagement across the IPBES community, reflecting the latter's commitment to strengthening the Platform's effectiveness, inclusiveness and impact.

The 35 recommendations build on the findings of the review, with 11 priority areas highlighted that the panel identified as most relevant. The priority recommendations fall into two categories: systemic improvements addressing the capacity and diversity of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, reinforcing preparatory processes for sessions of the Plenary, enhancing the role of national focal points, improving collaboration with other entities, and addressing funding gaps; and enhancements to the assessment process, addressing the assessment scoping and planning, broader expert diversity, stronger policy relevance, and a more effective policy support function overall.

The recommendations intend to provide a constructive basis for discussions among various IPBES actors rather than a prescribed set of actions. Many of the matters highlighted are already being addressed by the secretariat, which continues to strengthen processes and improve support mechanisms despite operating under substantial workload and resource pressures. With multiple assessments under way, the demands placed on the secretariat, the Bureau, the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, national focal points and the Plenary are significant. The recommendations with their implementation options should therefore be read as contributions to an informed deliberation on priorities, feasibility, and resourcing, with the recognition that decisions on whether, how and when to act rest fully with the Plenary and its subsidiary bodies.

Together, all of the recommendations aim to enhance coordination, transparency and inclusiveness across the IPBES system, ensuring that the rolling work programme remains realistic, balanced and effective. Continued openness about how the recommendations are considered and acted upon will be essential to maintaining confidence and engagement across the IPBES community.

Finally the panel draws attention to the limitations of its work as described in the full report⁵ and recommendation 29, which refer to improving future reviews of the effectiveness of the Platform.

Findings

1. Context

IPBES was established in 2012 to create a global platform similar to IPCC bridging science and policy on biodiversity and ecosystem services. In just over a decade, it has delivered landmark assessments, pioneered new methodologies, and built international communities of experts committed to informing policymaking and other decision-making. Its outputs have provided a scientific basis to support policymaking including the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) and strengthened the scientific foundations for informing action across multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), fulfilling its envisioned role.

IPBES has a commitment to transparency, learning, and continuous improvement. Following the conclusion of its first work programme, the Plenary requested the Executive Secretary² to gather the views of members and stakeholders on the review process undertaken at the end of the first work programme and tasked the Bureau and MEP to develop draft terms of reference (ToR) for a midterm review under the 2030 rolling work programme. A draft was welcomed at the ninth session and the ToR formally approved at the tenth session of the Plenary,³ establishing the mandate and scope for the current review to be conducted between IPBES-10 and IPBES-12.

2. Methodology and limitations

The midterm review of effectiveness of IPBES has two components: an internal review led by the Bureau and MEP and presented at the 11th session of the Plenary in December 2024⁴ and, an external review conducted by a panel of external experts, nominated by IPBES members, between March and October 2025. The external review panel built upon the internal review and further assessed some of the issues it had identified.

The external review combined a literature review, an online survey, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions (see Annex 1 Methodology, for the detailed description of the methodology used). The online survey was circulated widely to IPBES audiences, generating 195 valid responses (see Annex 2 Online survey results, for the results). Within available resources, interviews and focus group discussions involved more than 110 active participants, including the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP) members, task force (TF) members, secretariat staff, technical support unit (TSU) staff, assessment authors, national focal points (NFPs), stakeholders and representatives of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). Experiences and processes of other relevant science-policy bodies were also taken into account. The information collected provided complementary quantitative as well as qualitative perspectives on effectiveness, inclusiveness and impact of IPBES.

² Decision IPBES-7/1

³ Annex IX to decision IPBES-10/1: Terms of reference for the midterm review of the rolling work programme of IPBES up to 2030

⁴ IPBES/11/INF/22

The review also drew on direct observation of IPBES processes. Members of the external review panel attended the joint sessions of the 23rd and 24th MEP and Bureau meetings in April and July 2025 as observers, one online and one in-person in Bonn, Germany, as well as webinars, including an IPBES quarterly stakeholder meeting on 4 June 2025, the dialogue meeting with NFPs in the context of the additional government review of the summary for policymakers of the business and biodiversity assessment on 14 May 2025 and a webinar for newly designated IPBES national focal points on 4 June 2025. These observations allowed the panel to assess in practice how IPBES procedures are implemented.

All methods followed high ethical standards: participation was voluntary; informed consent was sought; and contributions were anonymised. Data were analysed thematically with the support of AI⁵ and triangulated⁶ across methods to identify converging findings, capture divergence among audiences and compare external perspectives with the outcomes of the internal review.

A number of constraints and limitations are noted with regard to the work of the external panel:

- Resource constraints: The report was developed by the external review panel members on a voluntary basis and within a short timeframe (April to October 2025) which limited the extent of observation, data collection and the depth of analysis.
- Data collection: The online survey received a good number of responses overall (195 determined as valid out of 249 submitted), however, some key groups were not well-represented, such as Pacific Island States. Similarly, the participation in interviews and focus group discussions, although substantial, varied across regions and roles. Inevitably the review may not have captured the full diversity of experiences across all groups and regions.
- Logistical and technical challenges: The Panel was selected to ensure regional balance. While this enriched the report with diverse perspectives, it also introduced logistical challenges. Significant time zone differences made scheduling meetings, full engagement and inclusive discussions among all panel members difficult. Furthermore, some panel members faced technical hurdles, including limited internet connectivity and difficulties accessing certain IT platforms.
- Language issues: Most of the exchanges as well as the preparation of the report were conducted in English. This may have limited the engagement of some of the panel members in the preparation process and burdened both the members who are fluent in English and those for whom contributions in English were more difficult. Language as a barrier to inputs to the review was also perceived in discussions with NFPs and stakeholders.

These limitations are noted to provide full transparency and context for the report's findings. They should be taken into account when interpreting the recommendations and may offer points to be considered for future reviews. Nevertheless, the external review panel takes full responsibility for the findings and recommendations presented in this report.

⁵ The data analysis combined artificial intelligence tools for transcription and coding with careful human review and interpretation to ensure accuracy and capture nuanced insights.

⁶ Data triangulation is a research strategy that involves using multiple data sources to study the same phenomenon, aiming to increase the validity and credibility of findings by comparing and contrasting information from various origins.

3. IPBES Plenary and the preparatory process

Preparatory processes, including informal dialogues, webinars, pre-session consultations and Chair's texts, were widely recognized as very helpful in orienting delegates and advancing formal consultations in Plenary sessions. Although the Chair's notes are not required to be prepared by the rules, their provision ahead of a Plenary session has supported preparation by Plenary participants. Timely documentation, when possible, and more inclusive participation in these preparatory processes should be maintained and could be further improved to enhance readiness for formal consultations (R04).

The Plenary, comprising all States members of IPBES, is responsible for taking decisions on the Platform's work programme, rules of procedure, subsidiary bodies, and overall governance. IPBES Plenary sessions are attended by a high proportion of IPBES members.⁷ Experts, fellows, IPLC, and youth representatives often have to secure their own fundings to attend Plenary sessions and this is reported as uneven across regions (R03, R34).

Respondents valued the Plenary sessions for two key reasons: the opportunity they provide for members and observers to engage directly with assessment authors, and the legitimacy and scientific credibility derived from the detailed line-by-line approval of the summaries for policymakers (SPMs). However, respondents also observed that the consideration of SPMs are becoming more adversarial, prolonging working group sessions and challenging some of the scientific findings as presented by assessment authors (R01, R05, R10).⁸ A shared understanding of IPBES principles and procedures and awareness of wider policy contexts could help those engaged in Plenary discussions to find solutions on difficult issues (R01, R04, R08, R10, R11, R20, R24).

Heavily loaded agendas and parallel consultations, such as simultaneous processes for the approval of two SPMs, have posed challenges for small delegations, exacerbated by limited availability of interpretation in multiple and/or extended sessions. (R01-03, R11). Under these time pressures, some agenda items, such as coordination between IPBES objectives and uptake of IPBES products, have received less attention (R02, R19).

4. MEP and Bureau

Survey responses indicated that the MEP provides appropriate oversight of the scientific and technical functions of IPBES.⁹ Respondents emphasised the critical role of the MEP in maintaining scientific credibility but also noted the limited visibility and recognition for contributions of MEP members (R05, R08). It was suggested that the expertise and experience of members of the MEP could be more fully utilised within IPBES processes and in providing leadership and coordination with IPBES TFs (R05-07, R09, R17, R19). Survey responses also identified the need to have additional or enhanced means to retain institutional memory and ensure knowledge transfer between successive MEPs (R06).

⁷ 97 IPBES members had registered to participate at IPBES11

⁸ By decision IPBES/1/1, rule 36, the Plenary takes decisions "on matters of substance by consensus, unless otherwise provided in its rules"

⁹ Online survey results Q5.1-3: 83% agree; 6% disagree; 11% neutral; N=144

Respondents noted that the MEP would benefit from a stronger representation of a diverse range of expertise, including social sciences, humanities, Indigenous and local knowledge (ILK), and other diverse knowledge systems, aligned with the IPBES rolling work programme,¹⁰ as well as encompassing a range of technical, policy-related, organizational and leadership skills (R06, R07, R09, R19). A good understanding of the roles, responsibilities and opportunities that are associated with the MEP would be helpful for prospective and new MEP members (R06, R20). It was also indicated that better management practices may be helpful to ensure the equitable distribution of work programme tasks and responsibilities among MEP members, which will avoid excessive workloads for individuals and foster full engagement of all MEP members (R07, R08).

Overall responses indicated that the Bureau carries out its administrative functions adequately.¹¹ Recommendations of the review of IPBES at the end of its first work programme regarding the separation of functions of the MEP and Bureau have been implemented.¹² However, some further guidance could help resolve continuing issues regarding the respective roles and responsibilities of the Bureau and the MEP (R05). The Bureau has responsibility for oversight of the administrative functions of the Platform and the MEP has responsibility for scientific and associated technical functions. However, Bureau members have some expectation to work on scientific and technical matters, jointly with the MEP. This requires careful oversight to promote complementary roles and avoid misunderstandings about where ultimate responsibility for certain scientific and technical functions lies (R08-10, R20). In addition to their administrative and financial functions, Bureau members may be called on to chair working groups, represent and reach out to their regions and subregions, guide communication and policy engagement, help to mobilize resources and partnerships and safeguard the credibility and legitimacy of the Platform: tasks for which they need to be well-equipped (R10).

It was also noted that the joint MEP and Bureau meetings provide limited opportunity for in-depth discussions on elements of the IPBES work programme, focusing more on procedural and administrative matters (R09). Both the MEP and, in particular, the Bureau currently lack gender balance (R06).¹³

5. IPBES members and national focal points

Governments that are IPBES members, are requested to designate a national focal point (NFP) to facilitate interaction on matters related to IPBES. The role of NFPs is multifaceted and may include, depending on national circumstances: representation of governments; providing a hub for communications with national actors and other stakeholders on IPBES; submitting requests and nominating experts; supporting national uptake and linking findings to policy processes. NFPs also contribute to capacity-building, knowledge and data mobilization and policy support tools.¹⁴

¹⁰ Decision IPBES-7/1

¹¹ Online survey results Q5.1-2: 83% agree; 3% disagree, 14% neutral; N=146

¹² IPBES/8/INF/22

¹³ The current MEP has an overwhelming majority of members from a natural science background (24 out of 25), only 2 members have expertise in ILK and the MEP is male dominated (17 male, 8 female). The current Bureau has only 1 female member out of 10 members.

¹⁴ Schmidt, J., Todota, C., & Hauck, J. (2022). Report of the CABES Needs Assessment concerning the Capacity Development Programme (Output 2). CoKnow Consulting, 21 December 2022.

The NFP role in mobilizing experts, nominating authors and fellows into assessments, encouraging reviewers to participate and coordinating review processes and submission of national comments is critical to achieving disciplinary, regional, and gender balance among IPBES experts and ensuring legitimacy and policy relevance in IPBES products. Some NFPs benefit from strong institutional anchoring and support from national platforms, allowing them to mobilize experts systematically, coordinate reviews and organize uptake activities. Other NFPs have strong interests in IPBES but institutional and resource constraints may limit their full and effective engagement. Some NFPs have facilitated the participation of ILK experts in national processes, ensuring their perspectives feed into IPBES but there continue to be barriers to IPLC representation, including limited funding, lack of language accessibility and different perspectives on diverse knowledge systems (R23). Evidence from the stakeholder survey highlights competing work commitments as one of the most significant obstacles to greater engagement across IPBES workstreams¹⁵ (R04, R11, R16, R20, R27).

Responses indicate that NFPs have a critical role in the functioning of IPBES, ensuring government engagement and legitimacy of IPBES processes and products (R01, R14). However, NFPs have varying capacities and contexts depending on national circumstances. This variability impinges on the representation of all regions and subregions within IPBES processes and contributes to the uneven uptake of IPBES products (R11-13). NFPs are also crucial in shaping who participates in IPBES and how its findings travel back into national contexts (R11).

6. IPBES stakeholders

Stakeholders in IPBES are defined broadly as all actors who can contribute to or use its outputs.¹⁶ Stakeholders perceive IPBES as a unique and credible platform that offers legitimate perspectives relevant to their interests. They participate in many IPBES processes including the nomination of experts, review of IPBES assessment chapters and SPMs, stakeholder forums, consultations and meetings of the capacity-building forum. Stakeholders are direct users of IPBES products and are also important in amplifying IPBES outputs, using assessments to raise awareness, build advocacy campaigns and connect science with policy and practice. Their participation is supported by self-organized networks such as ONet (Open-ended Network of IPBES Stakeholders) and IIFBES (International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services), which coordinate their inputs and provide a collective voice in Plenary sessions and in intersessional work. The results from the online survey showed that the non-governmental stakeholders are not fully satisfied with opportunities for involvement that IPBES provides (58-76% agreement on nine questions on their involvement in IPBES¹⁷).

The critical role of stakeholders as amplifiers, multipliers, and bridges to diverse expert and user communities is recognized as integral to the effectiveness, relevance and impact of IPBES. Although stakeholders are limited to observer status in IPBES decision-making, further steps can be taken to ensure their continuing and enhanced engagement and recognition in all IPBES processes (R06, R26, R27, R32, R35).

¹⁵ As per the IPBES Stakeholder Survey 2025 A high number of competing work commitments in aggregate is the second most relevant obstacle to greater engagement, after lack of financial support.

¹⁶ Decision IPBES-3/4: Communications, stakeholder engagement and strategic partnership

¹⁷ Q5.3 To what extent are non-governmental stakeholders effectively involved in the activities and decision-making processes of IPBES?

7. IPBES engagement with other entities

Respondents recognized IPBES as a respected knowledge provider for UN agencies and multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), particularly for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The UN Convention on Combating Desertification (UNCCD) also underlined the relevance of IPBES work for land degradation neutrality and approaches to integration of ILK in science assessments. The memoranda of cooperation¹⁸ between the IPBES secretariat and the secretariats of the CBD, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), and the UNCCD clarify intentions, and establish a framework to provide guidance on cooperation.¹⁹ The implementation of these agreements depends on effective mutual liaison and coordination mechanisms (R5, R9, R12).

In some responses, engagement with MEAs was characterised as “asymmetric.” In other words, the interaction between IPBES and MEAs is viewed as uneven, sometimes lacking mutual, reciprocal, and consistently effective engagement. For instance, CBD with its Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) has structured procedures for detailed consideration of IPBES outputs and uptake into policy decisions.²⁰ IPBES has a formal process for consideration of requests made by MEAs and other UN bodies related to biodiversity and ecosystem services.²¹ However, procedures for preparation of IPBES assessments establish independence from these bodies and limit the degree to which they are able to influence the work of IPBES to, for example, review of scoping documents and review of draft assessment chapters and SPMs (R12, R17). Specific and evolving needs of CBD and other MEAs, including the timing of assessment cycles, may not be fully taken into account within IPBES assessment products, reducing their relevance and uptake within those processes. Respondents noted that assessments are often framed around IPBES’s own conceptual framework and terminology, which may not be well-tuned to the needs of MEAs and can reduce their direct applicability, requiring additional “translation.”

Whilst respecting the independence of IPBES, further efforts may be needed to achieve good alignment of IPBES products with the needs of MEAs, in particular, those MEAs that have submitted formal requests to IPBES (R12).

IPBES has collaborative partnership arrangements with UNEP, UNESCO, UNDP, and FAO²² (the UN partners) to establish institutional links for the work of the Platform and its secretariat (R07, R09, R12, R13, R24, R25, R27). These partners contribute as observers in the MEP, technical and programmatic support, secondments to the secretariat, and assistance with fundraising, communications, and dissemination of IPBES products. UNESCO is recognized as a key partner on ILK, including hosting the TSU, and is seen as central to strengthening the ILK participators mechanism, building capacities of IPLCs and supporting effective networking (R23); FAO’s involvement provides important connections with productive sectors: agriculture, forestry and fisheries and has a particular interest in relevant assessments such as pollinators and

¹⁸ Based on decision IPBES-4/4, section III

¹⁹ <https://www.ipbes.net/multilateral-environmental-agreements>

²⁰ COP 12 Decision XII/25

²¹ Decision IPBES-1/3

²² Decision IPBES-2/8

sustainable use. UNEP serves as the host organization for the IPBES secretariat (noting that the secretariat is solely accountable to the IPBES Plenary on policy and programmatic matters;), and, through UNEP WCMC, provides the TSUs on policy support as well as the business and biodiversity assessment. This support is generally welcomed, though it was noted that UNEP systems can cause delays and extra costs for the secretariat, for example, in procurement and recruitment (R30). UNEP has many relevant programmes where there could be further opportunities for co-ordination and collaboration, for example, in regard to the Global Environmental Outlook. UNDP provides the flagship BES-Net network for stakeholders which strengthens IPBES' capacity for outreach and national implementation by drawing on UNDP's broad country-level presence and its integration with development planning frameworks (R12, R22). Whilst recognizing these essential, important and varied contributions, views were also expressed that the coordination and cooperation between IPBES and the UN partners could be further developed and enhanced.

The desire for a stronger relationship with the IPCC was often voiced by respondents. Both bodies address interconnected issues and calls for stronger collaboration are frequent (including in CBD COP decisions²³). The relationship with IPCC has been repeatedly considered at IPBES Plenary sessions²⁴ and IPBES and IPCC co-sponsored a workshop on biodiversity and climate change in 2021.²⁵ At IPBES-8, the Plenary thanked the organizers of the workshop but did not welcome or take note of the workshop report. Formal collaboration has been constrained by the mandates, procedures and schedules of IPBES and IPCC plenary meetings and the respective procedures of the Platform and the Panel. At IPBES-11 the Plenary invited the Bureau and the Executive Secretary of IPBES to further explore collaboration with IPCC²⁶, similarly IPCC in its lessons learned report²⁷ identified the need to develop clearer processes to enhance collaboration with IPBES (R05, R12, R25).

8. Objective 1 - assessing knowledge

Overall online survey respondents gave high scores to IPBES operating principles regarding scientific independence and credibility,²⁸ recognition and respect for Indigenous and local knowledge,²⁹ and policy relevance.³⁰ However, lower scores were given for adequate coverage of terrestrial, marine, and inland water biodiversity,³¹ balanced treatment of diverse knowledge systems and participation from different regions³² as well as bottom-up approaches.³³ Furthermore, satisfaction was lower on the assessment process itself, with around 60% of participants³⁴ agreeing that the expert nomination and selection process is transparent, balanced and inclusive and less than 60% agreement³⁵ was scored on the inclusion of social sciences and the humanities.

²³ CBD Decision 15/19 welcomes and invites for stronger collaboration between two bodies

²⁴ IPBES/9/9, IPBES/10/7

²⁵ IPBES/IPCC (2021) IPBES-IPCC co-sponsored workshop report on biodiversity and climate change. This workshop report and any recommendations or conclusions contained therein have not been reviewed, endorsed or approved by the Plenary of IPBES or IPCC.

²⁶ Decision IPBES-11/1

²⁷ IPCC-LXI/Doc. 9, p. 7

²⁸ Online survey question Q8.1-2: 89% agree, 5% disagree, 6% neutral; N=186

²⁹ Online survey question Q8.1-4: 89% agree, 3% disagree, 8% neutral; N=180

³⁰ Online survey question Q8.1-5: 88% agree, 4% disagree, 8% neutral; N=181

³¹ Online survey question Q8.1-11: 82% agree, 6% disagree, 12% neutral; N=171

³² Online survey question Q8.1-8: 78% agree, 12% disagree, 10% neutral; N=182

³³ Online survey question Q8.1-12: 73% agree, 10% disagree, 17% neutral; N=171

³⁴ Online survey questions Q2.1-1 - Q2.1-4

³⁵ Online survey questions Q2.1-7 and Q2.1-8

Scholarly work on diversity within IPBES complements the online survey findings. McElwee (2025)³⁶ shows a gender imbalance in experts selected for senior author roles such as CLAs. Lambertucci et al. (2025),³⁷ Wiegleb & Bruns (2025),³⁸ and Montana (2019)³⁹ raise concerns about a mismatch between regional and disciplinary expertise of the selected authors and the topics addressed within assessments, particularly with gaps in social sciences, humanities, and local perspectives (R14). On the other hand, McElwee (2025) states that progress has been made in regard to overall gender balance (excluding the leadership roles). Interviews indicated the challenges in striking and retaining balance across regions, relevant disciplines and gender through the nomination and selection processes and through the assessment development, with experts from some regions and disciplines being underrepresented^{40, 41} (R05, R11, R13, R14).

Authors also face high workloads and variable degrees of support from home institutions (R06, R13, R15). When authors are unable to fully engage this creates additional pressures on others in the author teams. Some respondents noted a lack of opportunity to engage with post-assessment outreach. However, the engagement differs between authorship roles where co-chairs and CLAs are heavily involved and lead authors (LAs) and review editors rarely visible (see also Lambertucci et al. 2025; R15). Additionally, several respondents compared IPBES unfavourably to IPCC in terms of visibility and impact for their work.

The external review process for assessments⁴² is widely seen as one of the strengths of IPBES and central to its credibility. Dialogue workshops have further enhanced the process by creating opportunities for exchange among reviewers, authors, and stakeholders. However, authors and fellows closely involved in assessments were more critical in their responses, with only 56% rating the review process as effective compared to 73% of all survey respondents.⁴³ Time constraints were mentioned as a limiting factor, leaving insufficient time to fully integrate review comments (R16).

Review comments on assessment chapters and SPMs, together with author responses, are made available on the IPBES website after an assessment is completed. However, the limited design and visibility of this feature restrict its usefulness. Consequently, reviewers often remain unaware of how their inputs were considered, which increases the likelihood of recurring comments across review rounds and in Plenary sessions. The reliance on English reduces accessibility. Thorough external review of scoping reports is also crucial to ensuring appropriate inclusion of disciplines and diverse knowledge systems and relevance to policy (R11, R13, R17).

SPMs are highly valued as the most visible and influential IPBES outputs, but some responses considered them too long, complex, academic and not well-tuned for informing the policy-making process (R17).

³⁶ McElwee, P. (2025). A tale of two panels: learning and coordinating across IPCC, IPBES, and other science-policy interfaces. *Climatic Change*, 178(3).

³⁷ Lambertucci, S. et al. (2025). Supporting researchers' engagement in IPBES: Barriers, motivations, and pathways forward. *Nature Sustainability*, 8, 112–121.

³⁸ Wiegleb, V., & Bruns, A. (2025). Whose Knowledge Counts? Unpacking the Uneven Geographies and Politics of Knowledge Co-Production in IPBES. *Human Ecology*.

³⁹ Montana, J. (2019). Co-production in action: perceiving power in the organisational dimensions of a global biodiversity expert process. *Sustainability Science*, 14(6), 1581–1591.

⁴⁰ Results from the IPBES Stakeholder Survey 2025 reflects the gap: most respondents were based in WEOG (31%), with 55% having a natural science background.

⁴¹ IPBES/9/INF/22 - Review of the nomination and selection processes of IPBES

⁴² For regular assessments: First order draft: peer-reviewed by experts. Second order draft: reviewed by governments and experts in parallel. Final draft: reviewed by governments, before Plenary approval. One review round for fast-track assessments

⁴³ Online survey question Q2.1-13

Assessment TSUs are recognized as the operational core of IPBES assessments, providing day-to-day coordination, project management, and technical and logistical support to authors and co-chairs. Interviewees and survey respondents alike noted that assessments would not function effectively without the professionalism, responsiveness, and commitment of their staff. Their work ensures overall coherence of the assessment process, while facilitating timely decision-making between the secretariat, Bureau, MEP, and expert teams.

Despite these strengths, several challenges were reported. TSUs have not always had sufficient capacity and/or flexibility to cope with intensive pressures at times during the assessment development process. Dependence on the resources and administrative systems of host institutions, often outside the secretariat, can introduce disparities in capacity, differing procedural requirements and pose barriers to integration with secretariat workflows. The dissolution of TSUs at the end of each assessment (6 months after adoption of the assessment SPM) can result in loss of institutional memory at a critical time for policy uptake. Short-term contracts and rapid turnover, requiring time for learning IPBES procedures and processes, was cited as a factor affecting efficiency of support for some TSUs (R18).

Some of these challenges are particularly visible in the context of the ongoing fast-track assessments. The short timeframe leaves little room to address issues with establishing the leadership and extended author teams and creates difficulties in scheduling meetings. Compressed timelines may limit intellectual exchanges among authors as well as the scope to integrate multi-disciplinary and diverse knowledge systems. Concerns were also raised regarding reduced external review opportunities and the difficulties authors faced in adequately understanding and responding to policy needs. These preliminary findings illustrate important vulnerabilities and a fuller review of the fast track procedures and timelines should be undertaken following the completion of the business and biodiversity assessment (R35).

9. Objectives 2, 3 and 4

Objectives 2, 3, and 4 under the IPBES rolling work programme up to 2030 address IPBES functions on capacity-building, data and knowledge management, recognition of Indigenous and local knowledge systems, policy support and work on scenarios and models (for more details see Annex 3 Analysis of IPBES Objectives 2, 3, 4). They are delivered through the work of time-bound TFs⁴⁴ and supported by dedicated TSUs, as appropriate. TFs report to MEP and Bureau. MEP and Bureau are part of the leadership (co-chairs) of TFs, and, as a management committee, guide their work. The MEP and Bureau review all products developed by TFs before they are presented to Plenary; or approve them within delegated mandates (see Table 4 in Annex 3 Analysis of IPBES Objectives 2, 3, 4). TFs also work closely with the experts conducting assessments and their TSUs.

9.1. Cross-cutting issues

The tasks under these objectives in the current rolling work programme have a major role in providing support mechanisms for IPBES work programme Objective 1 (Assessing knowledge) and enabling the production of high-quality assessments through training programmes, development and support for scenarios and models, data standards, catalogues, and

⁴⁴ Except for the Objective 3a and 4a on Knowledge generation catalysis and Policy support who do not have a task force

methodological tools, as well as communication products that frame assessment findings for diverse audiences. This support role has contributed directly to the credibility, legitimacy, and visibility of IPBES assessments.

Review findings highlight the strong commitment of all TFs and their TSUs to delivering high-quality outputs and providing responsive support to the broader IPBES process. TFs have overall shown to have developed effective operational routines and demonstrated their adaptability to tailor activities to the needs of particular assessments or policy contexts, even under tight timelines. There is a notable culture of collaboration, with cross-cutting products such as training materials, methodological guidance, and data standards co-developed across objectives.

However, there are some systemic challenges to the delivery of Objectives 2, 3, and 4. Formal mechanisms for collaboration between TSUs are weak, with a dependence on personal networks or project-specific arrangements (R19). Engagement with the MEP is often perceived as too formalised and limited in scope, constraining the MEPs ability to provide strategic leadership and ensure coherence across objectives (R05, R07, R19). Monitoring mechanisms to measure effectiveness are being developed but have a focus on monitoring activities rather than outcomes,⁴⁵ their utility will benefit from further review once the first reports are provided at IPBES-12 (R28).

9.2. Objective 2 - building capacity

Capacity-building is one of the most visible support functions of IPBES. The capacity-building TF and its TSU strengthen skills and networks for IPBES experts, including entry points for new experts through the fellowship programme, as well as, dialogue workshops for authors and NFPs (R11). The fellowship scheme is often cited as a flagship achievement, fostering intergenerational learning and building expertise across regions and subregions.⁴⁶ Broader activities such as onboarding NFPs, and capacity-building forums have supported cross-regional exchange and encouraged policy uptake (R20, R24). Collaboration with other TSUs, including joint training and methodological guidance, has made efficient use of resources and demonstrated adaptability (R19, R20).

Despite these successes, there are calls for further strengthening capacity-building within the framework of IPBES activities. These include: exploring ways to help IPBES members strengthen their capacity to participate more effectively in IPBES processes; promoting regional and disciplinary balance in IPBES participation; strengthening involvement of ILK holders and access to diverse knowledge systems (R20, R23); further supporting participants in their various roles and responsibilities at Plenary sessions (R05, R11, R12); and, recognizing that the communities of practice need to be better integrated into IPBES processes (R13, R24). Respondents also noted that capacity-building tends to focus on supporting assessments, while building capacity for participants in Plenary sessions and activities oriented towards policy uptake receive less attention (R20). Addressing these capacity needs will require further collaboration with TSUs and TFs including ILK, policy support, and scenarios and models (R19). Collaboration with external partners should be explored to extend reach and reduce costs of delivery (R20).

⁴⁵ See annex VIII to the Decision IPBES-11/1

⁴⁶ Lim, M., Lynch, A. J., Fernández-Llamazares, Á., Balint, L., Basher, Z., Chan, I., Jaureguiberry, P., Mohamed, A. A. A., Mwampamba, T. H., Palomo, I., Pliscoff, P., Salimov, R. A., Samakov, A., Selomane, O., Shrestha, U. B., & Sidorovich, A. A. (2017). Early-career experts essential for planetary sustainability. In *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability* (Vol. 29, pp. 151–157). Elsevier B.V.

Additionally, respondents stressed the importance of coordination with UN partners and MEAs to avoid duplication and increase efficiency (R12, R19, R20). Initiatives such as BES-Net and Learning for Nature, delivered through UNDP and United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), were highlighted as complementary to IPBES, though collaboration often remains temporary, having a silo effect if not managed well, rather than taking a longer-term comprehensive scope. New initiatives such as the network of Regional and/or Subregional Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centres established under the CBD⁴⁷ may provide further opportunities for longer term collaboration, which was also identified at the 27th SBSTTA meeting⁴⁸ (R07, R20).

9.3. Objective 3a - advanced data and knowledge management

The data and knowledge TF, with its TSU, ensures that IPBES assessment data is accessible, interoperable, and preserved for long-term use. They also support authors with tools in capturing knowledge gaps and facilitate linkages between IPBES products, embedding transparency and ethics into assessments. Their cross-cutting role supports other TSUs and TFs, while providing authors with direct technical assistance, literature searches, and tailored data workflows. Efforts to present outputs in linked and reusable formats and explore responsible use of AI have been addressed under the current mandate. Issues regarding an optimization of the working arrangements within the TF to better address challenges were also highlighted.

Challenges identified relate mainly to the misalignment between what assessment authors need, what the TF can offer, and what the TSU is actually resourced and mandated to provide. According to interviews, authors often require specialised technical support, such as large-scale literature mining, coding, GIS processing or data cleaning, that many TF members are not equipped to deliver, as most lack the necessary technical expertise (R19, R21).

As a result, the TSU frequently undertakes work that goes well beyond its formal mandate, stepping in to complete technically demanding tasks to prevent delays in assessments. This has created a persistent grey zone between expected support and de facto responsibilities, and the TSU's additional contributions are not formally recognized (R21).

To deliver advice, leadership and foresight which enables IPBES to adjust to rapidly emerging data and knowledge management technologies, the TF may require further specialist expertise in key areas like ethics of AI, database management, and GIS. The TSU, in consultation with the MEP and Bureau, has sought to address knowledge gaps by inviting “resource persons” but these roles lack formal recognition (R21).

9.4. Objective 3a - knowledge generation catalysis

The knowledge generation catalysis function ensures that assessments are able to identify knowledge gaps and stimulate new research. This function is overseen directly by the MEP and Bureau without a TF. The activities under this workstream were endorsed at the last Plenary session.⁴⁹ The TSU was only established in July 2025 and this has limited the possibility to fully review the effectiveness of the delivery of this objective under current working arrangements. Nonetheless, it was reported that the TSU provides templates and methodological guidance,

⁴⁷ CBD/COP/DEC/15/8

⁴⁸ IISD SBSTTA-27 #1 Earth Negotiations Bulletin Vol. 9 No. 866 from Tuesday, 21 October 2025. Accessible at: bit.ly/sbstta27_sb8j1

⁴⁹ Decision IPBES-11/1 Annex IV

organizes dialogues with funders and tracks progress in filling gaps. Innovations such as “general knowledge needs” have created more flexible entry points for targeted research, with opportunities to link IPBES outputs more closely to sustainability science⁵⁰ and biodiversity policy goals.

However, some limitations in capacity within the MEP and Bureau to provide oversight of the work plan and the TSU were reported. Engagement with assessment authors is uneven, confidentiality rules delay the release of information on knowledge gaps until after approval and identified gaps may need better alignment with external research funders’ priorities (R22). Regional engagement has been considered uneven as difficulties have been acknowledged in connecting to certain regions where research networks and funders may be less known to the TSU (R22). Opportunities for collaboration with UNDP and other UN Partners could enhance IPBES’ capacities to reach out to regions and subregions (R11, R12, R22).

9.5. Objective 3b - enhanced recognition of and work with Indigenous and local knowledge (ILK) and diverse knowledge systems

The ILK TF and its TSU seek to embed ILK across IPBES processes and products. They support the conduct of assessments by enabling experts in, and holders of, ILK and diverse knowledge systems to engage as authors and contributors, providing access to grey literature, peer review of assessment reports and shaping tailored outputs for IPLCs. Dialogue workshops, combining community visits and exchanges, are widely regarded as the most impactful mechanism for ILK integration. The work of IPBES in fostering co-production of knowledge with IPLCs has gained external recognition from UNEP, the Arctic Council and the IPCC.

Some continuing barriers to engagement were noted including: approval of travel visas and IPBES procedures for financial support to developed country participants (R23, R34). However, members of the ILK TF and all participants in ILK dialogue workshops from eligible countries receive funding. Restrictions may apply when IPBES meetings are scheduled on short notice due to bureaucratic limitations of the Platform. Additionally, language barriers and over-reliance on conventional scientific formats was reported to limit ILK contributions. Awareness of IPBES among IPLCs is not widespread. Representation of IPLCs in IPBES processes is uneven (R03, R04, R12, R13, R23, R34), for instance, there have been no IPLC fellows and MEP representatives to date and continuity of knowledge across the cycle of the ILK TF member rotations can be a challenge.

9.6. Objective 4a - advanced work on policy instruments, policy support tools, and methodologies

The policy support function seeks to ensure that IPBES products are policy relevant and useful for policy and other decision makers. This function is overseen directly by the MEP and Bureau without a TF. The TSU supports the policy support function, including organizing and facilitating online dialogues with NFPs, experts and other relevant stakeholders (Table 4 in Annex 3 Analysis of IPBES Objectives 2, 3, 4). The TSU has supported uptake events and partnerships with national

⁵⁰ In this context “sustainability sciences” is used to indicate science that is policy-supportive, targeted, and oriented toward filling real gaps rather than only following existing funding calls.

and international bodies which act as intermediaries to promote and tailor IPBES products to specific audiences and extend the reach of IPBES. The TSU also monitors the use of IPBES assessment through regular surveys.⁵¹

The policy support function is broad (Table 4 in Annex 3 Analysis of IPBES Objectives 2, 3, 4). It requires a good understanding of the demands and needs of policy users at national and global levels to support connecting scientific assessments with policy (R13, R14, R17-20, R22-24, R27, R28). It also requires strong connections across IPBES functions and bodies, in particular assessment author teams, capacity-building functions, NFPs, stakeholders and communications (R19, R24). The role of MEP and Bureau in providing oversight of the function, without a TF, may need to be enhanced and supported by additional mechanisms, to enable stronger strategic direction and leadership (R07, R12, R35).

It was noted that the TSU has limited capacity to accommodate the heavy workload of managing all the work plan activities to ensure the proper integration of measures for the timely consideration of policy-relevant enablers during and after the completion of assessments that support the uptake of scientific evidence in policy- and decision-making arenas. For example, one dialogue meeting with NFPs per assessment may be insufficient. Also, further capacity may be needed to develop and maintain an understanding of policy needs and contexts to help shape IPBES communications at global, regional and sub-regional scale (R24, R27, R35). Measuring policy impact of IPBES remains difficult, as policies evolve from multiple influences and references to IPBES are not always explicit, however some progress has been made by the policy support TSU in the form of online surveys (2020 and 2024; R24, R28).

9.7. Objective 4b - advanced work on scenarios and models

The scenarios and models TF and TSU provide advice to all the expert teams in IPBES, in particular assessment authors, and seek to catalyse further development of scenarios and models for future IPBES assessments. The TF also plays a bridging role at the science-policy interface by translating complex technical language associated with modelling and scenarios for a range of users. This includes the promotion of the Nature Futures Framework, through a community of practice, as a tool to catalyse work on scenarios to support IPBES work. External engagement, including with the IPCC, has enhanced visibility and provided some alignment.

Respondents noted the need for timely integration of scenarios and models into assessments. Further opportunities to improve the effectiveness of contributions of the TF to the assessment process were identified including promoting coherence and consistency across concurrent and sequential assessments and maintaining institutional memory (R25). The TF may also have a role in demonstrating the need for, and utility of, scenarios and models within assessments, despite perceptions of complexity and resource demands. The level of engagement among IPBES members in the use of scenarios and models for the uptake of the IPBES findings varies greatly due to the scientific and technical complexity of matters related to scenarios and modelling (R24, R25).

⁵¹ IPBES/11/INF/17: Information on advanced work on policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies

10. Objective 5 - Communicating and Engaging

Communication has become one of IPBES's strongest assets and the Platform is recognized as a credible and visible voice in the global biodiversity and environment arenas. Outreach products such as infographics, videos, podcasts and fact sheets have made complex findings of assessments more accessible. Compared to other science-policy bodies, such as the IPCC or UNCCD's SPI, IPBES has developed a diverse set of outreach tools to communicate its findings to policymakers and other relevant stakeholders. IPBES has raised its profile and impact, for example, total social media impressions increased from 41m in 2020 to 146m in 2022.⁵² Results from the 2025 IPBES Stakeholder Survey shows progress in inclusivity, clarity and engagement with its stakeholder base compared to the results from a survey conducted in 2020.⁵³ Indicators set in the communication strategy are relatively qualitative and broad, providing a limited scope for monitoring the impact of IPBES communication and engagement achievements (R26-28).

The secretariat is central to this success, providing not only professional communication products but also active support to stakeholder networks. ONet and IIFBES both benefit from secretariat support, helping them to amplify IPBES messages and mobilize broader participation. Online meetings have been seen as a viable opportunity for better communication and outreach.⁵⁴ However, time-zone issues were raised as a challenge limiting inclusivity and participation (R26).

Objectives 2, 3, and 4 have different communication needs, generally more targeted to particular stakeholder groups, communities of practice, IPBES members/NFPs. While capacity-building benefits from sustained visibility, objectives such as ILK, knowledge generation catalysis and scenarios and models have narrower, more technical and tailored communication needs. Their contributions, such as ILK dialogue workshops, the articulation of knowledge gaps, or the Nature Futures Framework, do not attract the same attention in broader IPBES outreach (R26, R27).

NFPs are another critical communication channel. In some regions, there are positive examples of NFPs using IPBES products for national awareness campaigns and briefings, underscoring the potential of NFPs as communication multipliers. At the same time, communication to NFPs often remains limited to formal notifications sent by the secretariat, with more limited communications to regions by Bureau members, with few tailored or interactive formats to strengthen dialogue (R04, R11, R26, R27). Regional communication gaps are also clear, particularly in relation to language accessibility, where delayed or absent translations hinder broader IPBES outreach (R26).

Authors and fellows not currently involved in communications and outreach are a potential additional resource, particularly within regions and disciplinary networks (R15).

The IPBES website is frequently described as difficult to navigate, with important documents and updates hard to find with a document search function (R26).

⁵² IPBES/10/INF/14: Information on strengthened communication

⁵³ IPBES Stakeholder Survey 2025 – Analysis Report in IPBES/MEP-Bureau/24/10 Communicating and engaging: Stakeholder engagement

⁵⁴ IPBES/9/INF/21: Lessons learned from online meetings and other online working practices

It was also noted that procurement and approval procedures can further slow down communications logistics, delaying or complicating the roll-out of outreach activities (R30).

11. Objective 6 - Improving the effectiveness of the Platform

Monitoring of effectiveness is addressed in Objective 6 of the rolling work programme and the procedures for conducting periodic reviews, including the current midterm external review and the end-term review (R29). The rolling work programme has a process of regular reporting on activities and outputs, including the development and monitoring of a set of performance indicators.⁵⁵ Monitoring of TSUs activities are considered satisfactory under existing project cooperation agreements. At the functional level, some TSUs are developing their own theories of change, which provide a promising approach for linking activities to intended outcomes and could be further rolled out across the Platform. The IPBES impact tracking database (TRACK) enables the voluntary reporting of uptake events and policy impacts by NFPs and stakeholders - so far recording 617 events.⁵⁶ The Global Assessment in particular stands out: its high media visibility brought it to the attention of ministries, while its framing on direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss fed into the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework⁵⁷ and the EU Biodiversity Strategy.⁵⁸ Other examples of impact include: in Japan assessments are cited in cabinet approval processes of their NBSAP; in Korea the National Institute of Ecology translates outputs into ministry projects; in the Democratic Republic of Congo a national platform has been established; in Malawi IPBES has informed the national ecosystem assessment in Zimbabwe IPBES products have shaped discussions at biodiversity forums; in the EU IPBES assessments have triggered updates to the EU invasive alien species list and been used to benchmark Horizon Europe research projects. Whilst TRACK is invaluable for sharing information and experiences it does not provide a systematic or consistent framework for measuring how IPBES outputs contribute to national policies, international processes or societal outcomes (R28).

A rapid analysis of the indicators developed under objectives 2, 3, and 4 was undertaken as part of the external review. This analysis suggests that the current set of indicators lacks a coherent methodological framework.⁵⁹ Nearly 80 per cent of the indicators focus on activities or outputs, such as the number of workshops, publications or participants, while only about 20 per cent can be considered outcome-oriented. One indicator could be broadly interpreted as impact-oriented. The indicators are not consistently aligned with objectives, and the hierarchy between inputs, outputs, outcomes, and impacts remains unclear (R19-25, R28, R31).

When assessed against SMART criteria, the indicators perform unevenly:

1. Specific: most indicators are not clearly defined or do not include set targets.
2. Measurable: generally satisfied, as most indicators are expressed in quantifiable terms.
Achievable: largely unmet, since they lack specificity.

⁵⁵ Annex VIII to decision IPBES-11/1

⁵⁶ TRACK database accessed 27 October 2025

⁵⁷ CBD/COP/DEC/XV/4 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

⁵⁸ EU biodiversity strategy for 2030 – Bringing nature back into our lives, Publications Office of the European Union, 2021, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2779/677548>

⁵⁹ For example, Logical Framework (Logframe), Theory of Change (ToC) or Results-Based Management (RBM)

3. Relevant: difficult to determine in many cases; indicators are mostly output-oriented and were not developed within a results framework, limiting their evaluative value.
4. Time-bound: only three indicators include explicit time frames.

The indicators will be reported for the first time at IPBES-12 and it will be useful to further consider these issues following the experience of producing and using indicators to assess performance.

Indicators have not been developed for the fundraising and communication strategies. The stakeholder engagement strategy includes 11 draft indicators grouped into six categories which are broadly relevant to the objectives they intend to support (Annex 4 Analysis of IPBES indicators), however, they were not considered to be specific, measurable, or time-bound (R28, R31).

12. Funding, budget, and work planning

The annual expenditure of IPBES is higher than its current annual income, with spending ranging from \$7–8 million per year, while income in recent years has been in the range \$4–7 million. It is projected to be at the lower end of this range in future years. Large one-off contributions, as well as, the lower costs incurred during the years of the pandemic, have created a reserve of around \$10 million in the IPBES Trust Fund. However, at these funding and spending levels, reserves are projected to run out within the current work programme cycle, around 2028. The IPBES Trust Fund relies on a very narrow donor base, with around 20 members regularly providing voluntary contributions. IPBES is highly dependent on a handful of countries and vulnerable to changes in their economic situations and political priorities.

In-kind contributions from IPBES members, strategic partners and institutions are also important. TSUs are funded from the IPBES Trust Fund to around 50% each, with their respective partners contributing around 50% of the operational costs. IPBES members also contribute by hosting Plenary sessions, expert and author meetings and their logistics. The Government of Germany provides in-kind support to the secretariat hosted in Bonn. Additional in-kind support comes through capacity-building workshops, stakeholder engagement activities, provision of data and digital infrastructure and secondments to the secretariat. As importantly, IPBES relies heavily on the voluntary time of experts and the backing of their home institutions. Together, these forms of support substantially reduce direct financial costs and have enabled IPBES to deliver a broad work programme despite its modest trust fund. At the same time, reliance on windfalls, voluntary and short-term arrangements creates vulnerabilities for long-term planning, continuity and institutional memory.

IPBES has delivered a huge programme of work despite having a budget that is a fraction of those of similar international programmes, such as IPCC. However, there is a mismatch between ambition in the work programme and resources available to support delivery. The rolling work programme has mandated multiple assessments, capacity-building, knowledge generation, policy support and various other activities under objectives 2, 3 and 4 and enhanced stakeholder engagement but it may not be possible to deliver this full programme without additional and adequate funding contributions. If the forecast funding gap is not addressed it may require consideration of options to scale back activities, delaying or reducing the number of assessments, or reducing the number and size of face-to-face meetings. Nevertheless, this

review has also found a strong desire to maintain the ambition and improve the effectiveness and inclusivity of the platform, which would require additional resources.

To address the mismatch between income and expenditure and sustain an ambitious work programme, the secretariat has engaged in fundraising efforts to broaden the donor base by reaching out to non-contributing IPBES member states, public sector organizations, multilateral institutions, international financial institutions, private philanthropic foundations and private companies. This has brought in some high-profile partners and modest diversification in the funding base, but fundraising of this kind is unusual for UN organizations⁶⁰ and is expected to remain well below national contributions. One officer in the secretariat is dedicated to private fundraising and the post stayed vacant from August 2022 to August 2024. Constraints also come from dealing with slow due-diligence and donor agreement procedures, limited visibility offered to donors, limited possibility for earmarking of their contributions and no tax incentives for donors. The fundraising strategy⁶¹ helped broaden the resource base and could be further strengthened with measurable, achievable and time-bound targets (R31). To maximize funding from members, IPBES programmes must be well-targeted at the needs they have expressed or endorsed.

The IPBES rolling work programme to 2030 was widely regarded as innovative for providing flexibility and a long-term perspective amid uncertain funding and shifting policy demands. According to the responses to an on-line survey on potential future threats to IPBES,⁶² it was indicated that respondents see growing risks from politicisation of scientific discussions, unstable funding as well as geopolitical tensions. Additional concerns included regional and stakeholder imbalances within IPBES processes, expert fatigue, data gaps, misinformation and limited national uptake of IPBES's outputs. IPBES has also received numerous submissions for new assessments, including priorities agreed by CBD COP-16. Some survey and interview respondents, however, stressed the importance of consolidating existing work and enabling greater uptake in relation to policy development, in particular the global review of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework scheduled for CBD COP-19.

The ability of IPBES to respond to emerging issues is shaped by its procedural framework. While established procedures⁶³ safeguard scientific rigour and credibility, they also introduce standardised processes, lengthy consultations and decision-making timescales between Plenary sessions which translate to slow responsiveness. Although fast-track assessment procedures were envisaged to increase timeliness while maintaining scientific credibility and political legitimacy, in practice this has raised challenges for author teams due to lack of sufficient time for assessment and review processes (see Section 8 above). Workshops on biodiversity and pandemics and biodiversity and climate change have also proven useful in collating scientific and technical information on urgent matters but the legitimacy of workshop reports has been challenged. Respondents further suggested diversifying IPBES products with workshops and technical reports or targeted synthesis reports tailored to specific policy audiences. Further currency and relevance in ongoing assessments could be achieved by better

⁶⁰ As the IPBES Secretariat is provided by UNEP it falls under UNEP due diligence processes

⁶¹ Decision IPBES-5/6 Annex II

⁶² Q9.1 Would you like to provide additional comments on potential future threats that may impact IPBES' effectiveness, and how IPBES might anticipate and mitigate them? N=87

⁶³ Decision IPBES-3/3

engagement with policy users throughout the assessment cycle to ensure assessment outputs are well-aligned with policy needs.

Decisions on the future work programme will need to achieve a balance between the consolidation and uptake of existing IPBES products, ongoing assessments and consideration of new requests for assessments, all within the limited human and financial resources available (R33, R35). Quality, relevance and inclusive processes remain imperative even if that has consequences for the volume and pace of work undertaken by IPBES.

13. IPBES Secretariat

The secretariat was consistently recognized and highly appreciated as the technical and administrative backbone of IPBES operations. Respondents highlighted its central role in preparing for Plenary sessions, technically supporting the coordination of assessments, supporting TSUs⁶⁴ and ensuring cohesion and coordination continuity across the work programme. Despite operating on a very limited budget and human resources, respondents emphasised that the secretariat managed to deliver an impressive pace, volume and high quality of work. The recent internal audit⁶⁵ confirmed the secretariat effectiveness in implementing the work programme and raised concerns on staffing capacity to match workloads.

Respondents noted some concerns about the UNEP procurement system used by IPBES which is not well-adapted to modern demands, thereby adding to costs and slowing some basic operational tasks (R30). Heavy burdens were placed on the secretariat by some Plenary decisions on work programme activities, such as undertaking multiple assessment processes at the same time (R02, R10).

14. IPBES operating principles

The work of IPBES is guided by eleven operating principles:⁶⁶

1. Collaborate with existing initiatives on biodiversity and ecosystem services, including multilateral environment agreements, United Nations bodies, and networks of scientists and knowledge holders, to fill gaps and build upon their work while avoiding duplication;
2. Be scientifically independent and ensure credibility, relevance, and legitimacy through peer review of its work and transparency in its decision-making processes;
3. Use clear, transparent, and scientifically credible processes for the exchange, sharing and use of data, information, and technologies from all relevant sources, including non-peer-reviewed literature, as appropriate;
4. Recognize and respect the contribution of Indigenous and local knowledge to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems;

⁶⁴ Survey responses on the efficiency and effectiveness of collaboration between the Secretariat and the TSUs showed agreement levels of 80%, 81%, 77%, 69%, 71% and 76% (Q5.1-9, Q5.1-25, Q5.1-30, Q5.1-34, Q5.1-41, Q5.1-48, respectively). Respondents expressed stronger agreement regarding interactions with the capacity-building and data and knowledge management TSUs (80% and above), while weaker agreement was reported for ILK and policy support (around 70%).

⁶⁵ OIOS Report 2025/016: Audit of the United Nations Environment Programme secretariat of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. 26 June 2025. Assignment No. AA2025-220-02

⁶⁶ IPBES (2012): Functions, operating principles and institutional arrangements of IPBES. Panama City 16-21 April 2012.

5. Provide policy-relevant information, but not policy-prescriptive advice, mindful of the respective mandates of the multilateral environmental agreements;
6. Integrate capacity-building into all relevant aspects of its work according to priorities decided by the Plenary;
7. Recognize the unique biodiversity and scientific knowledge thereof within and among regions and the need for the full and effective participation of developing countries and balanced regional representation and participation in its structure and work;
8. Take an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach that incorporates all relevant disciplines, including social and natural sciences;
9. Recognize the need for gender equity in all relevant aspects of its work;
10. Address terrestrial, marine, and inland water biodiversity and ecosystem services and their interactions;
11. Ensure the full use of national, subregional, and regional assessments and knowledge, as appropriate, including by ensuring a bottom-up approach.

To assess the fulfilment of the operating principles the review panel included a specific question in the online survey (see Section 8 of the Appendix 1.5 Survey to support the midterm external review of the effectiveness of IPBES). Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed that each IPBES operating principle is being fulfilled (Figure 1).

Overall, IPBES operating principles are perceived as largely fulfilled, with agreement levels ranging from 73% to 91%.

Operating Principle 5, which concerns providing policy-relevant but non-prescriptive recommendations respectful of the mandates of different MEAs, received the highest rating with 91% positive and only 3% negative responses. Operating Principles 3, 4, 2 and 8 followed closely, each recording 89% positive responses, with 2%, 3%, 4% and 7% negative responses, respectively. Operating Principle 11, which aims to ensure national, subregional and regional assessments and knowledge, received the lowest positive score (73%) and the highest negative score (10%). This limitation in ensuring a genuinely bottom-up approach was also widely reflected in interviews and focus-group discussions. These issues are addressed in recommendations: R04, R06, R10, R11, R13, R14, R17, R20, R22-24, R27, R34.

8. IPBES operating principles

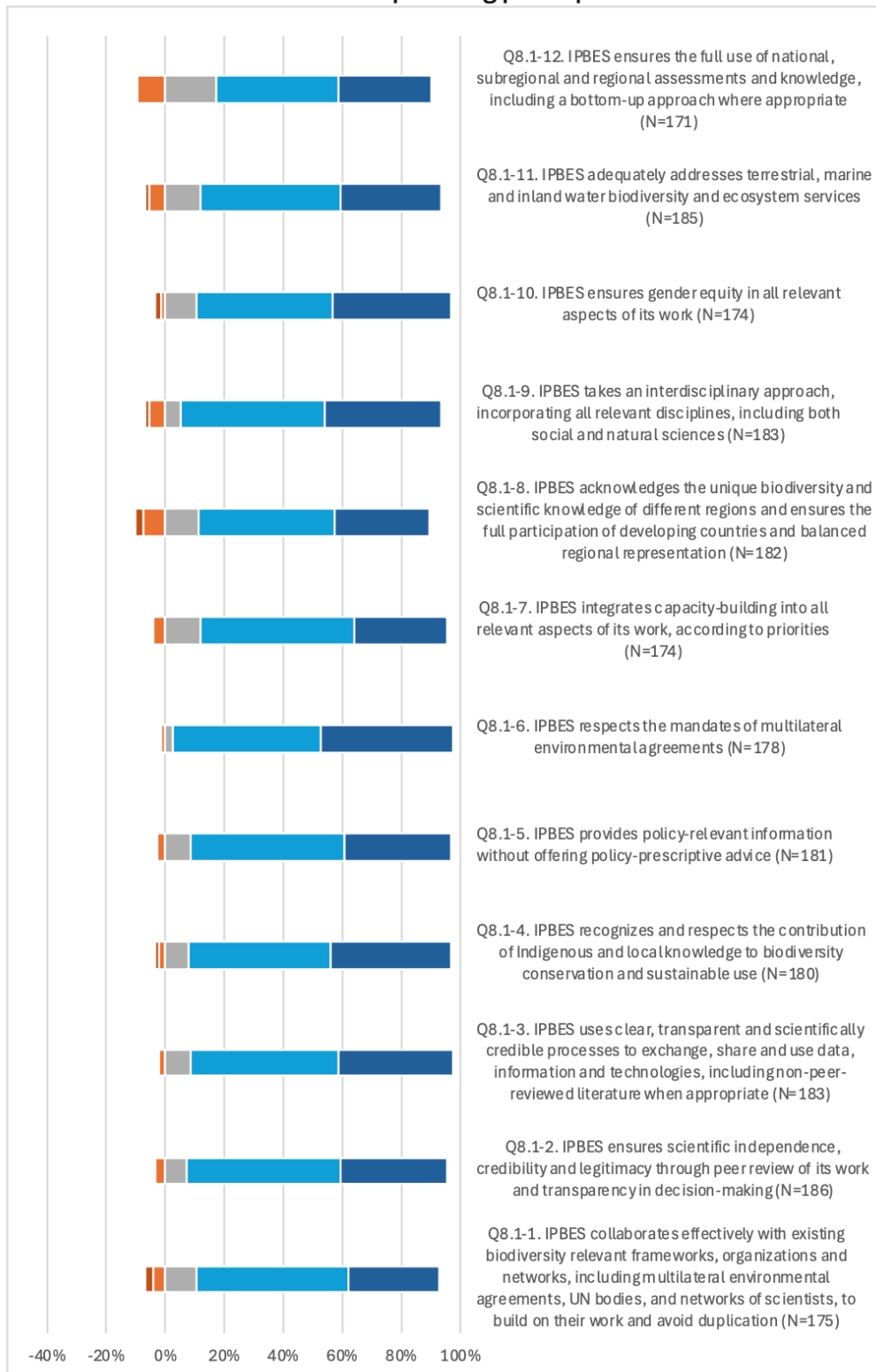


Figure 1 Responses to the online survey Question 8 on IPBES operating principles. (Dark red – strongly disagree; orange – disagree; grey – neither agree nor disagree; light blue – agree; dark blue – strongly agree. Note: Operating principle 5 was split into two parts in the survey: Q8.1-5 and Q8.1-6.)

Recommendation and implementation options

Building on the findings and including suggestions provided in the internal review,⁶⁷ interviews, focus group discussions, and online survey results, as well as the experiences and observations of panel members, the external review panel developed 35 recommendations each accompanied by a number of possible implementation options. The implementation options, which are non-exhaustive and, in some cases, overlapping or mutually exclusive, are intended to support the implementation of the recommendations with some practical proposals. Whilst endorsing the overall view that IPBES has become a significant, highly effective, and innovative international science–policy interface, the recommendations of the panel are intended to support the Platform’s continued development and enhanced effectiveness, in alignment with the Platform’s operating principles (Chapter 14).

Reflecting the interconnected nature of IPBES functions and bodies, the recommendations themselves are interlinked across the Platform and are largely synergistic. To illustrate these relationships, the review panel prepared tables showing how the recommendations relate to the main actors involved in IPBES (Figure 2) and the synergies between recommendations (Figure 3). Therefore, using Figure 2, it is possible to identify which are the main recommendations which are relevant to a particular actor (e.g., the Plenary, the MEP, or NFPs) and, using Figure 3, which recommendations are strongly connected with another. In addition, the recommendation table below (Table 1) provides an indicative assessment of possible budgetary implications for each recommendation and serves to raise awareness of financial implications and possible trade-offs in face of the current budgetary constraints. The recommendations are aligned with and in some areas extend beyond the requests set in the ToR for the midterm review⁶⁸ (Figure 4).

The Plenary may wish to request the Bureau and the MEP to develop an action plan responding to these recommendations and the possible options for implementation, for further consideration by the Plenary.

⁶⁷ IPBES/11/INF/22: Midterm review of the Platform under the rolling work programme up to 2030: report of the internal part of the review

⁶⁸ Annex IX to decision IPBES-10/1: Terms of reference for the midterm review of the rolling work programme of IPBES up to 2030

Drawing on the expert judgement of the external review panel, eleven recommendations were prioritised as having the greatest potential to enhance the overall effectiveness of the Platform. Most of these recommendations concern systemic aspects regarding the ways in which IPBES works. Addressing these recommendations will provide an enabling environment for operationalising other recommendations.

The panel also recognizes the ongoing efforts of the Platform to monitor and improve its functions, consistent with Objective 6 of the rolling work programme, and offers recommendations to help develop a more integrated monitoring and evaluation framework (R28). The priority recommendations are identified with a grey fill in the table below.

Finally, the recommendations and implementation options presented in this document are intended to provide a constructive basis for discussions among various IPBES actors rather than a prescribed set of actions. They reflect issues raised consistently across interviews, focus groups, and online survey responses, as well as options considered by the panel in light of the evidence. Many of the matters highlighted are already being addressed by the secretariat.

Table 1 Recommendations with possible implementation options (Resource implications are categorised as follows: “Yes” – resources implications are expected; “No” – no major resource implications foreseen; “Probably” – dependent on which implementation options are selected; and “+” – if positive budgetary implications through increased efficiency or additional funding opportunities or “-” – if increase of spendings are expected.)

ID	Recommendation	Possible implementation options (non-exhaustive)	Resource implication
R01	Uphold the scientific integrity of IPBES processes and assessments during sessions of the IPBES Plenary, allowing inclusive deliberations and efficient proceedings.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to compile best practices and lessons learned from previous assessments and provide further targeted training for assessment co-chairs and authors and working group co-chairs on intergovernmental, science-policy processes 2. Refer to the terms compiled from completed assessments in the IPBES Glossary⁶⁹ to facilitate the building of consensus and the subsequent approval of the SPM. 3. Ensure time is managed well to make sure that all participating IPBES members have opportunity to speak in plenary and working group sessions. 4. Encourage continued use of consensus building approaches (e.g., friends of the Chair). 5. Invite the MEP and Bureau to further explore approaches for timely identification and discussion of contrasting viewpoints on key findings within SPMs and consider how alternative interpretations of findings could be presented within SPMs. 	Yes (-)
R02	Enhance Plenary oversight of all the deliverables of the rolling work programme by ensuring full consideration of all agenda items during sessions of the Plenary.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Limit the number of assessments for consideration by Plenary to one per Plenary session. 2. Further improve time management and transparency by preparing scenario notes⁷⁰ on discussion flow, working groups, and priorities. 3. Ensure time-management enables adequate consideration of all agenda items. 	Probably (-)
R03	Enable effective participation of small delegations, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, fellows and youth in Plenary sessions and avoid timing conflicts with other international events.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to ensure final-day scheduling and funding for participants is aligned to enable all participants to attend discussions in full. <p>Note: the effective participation of small delegations is addressed in detail through implementation options of R01 on scientific integrity, R02 on Plenary oversight, R04 on pre-session consultations, R20 on capacity-building, and R32, R33, and R34 on budgetary considerations.</p>	Probably (-)
R04	Ensure that timely, informal pre-session consultations , regional preparatory processes, and structured dialogues are available across time zones to allow IPBES members, stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples and local	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage informal intersessional regional preparatory processes, with input from MEP and Bureau, to support IPBES members to engage with assessment findings, to identify concerns and seek solutions ahead of Plenary sessions, including through online platforms, as appropriate. 	Yes (-)

⁶⁹ <https://www.ipbes.net/glossary>

⁷⁰ Documents that outline the planned proceedings

<p>communities and youth, assessment authors, and fellows to engage effectively ahead of sessions of the Plenary.</p>	<p>2. Improve opportunities for structured dialogue and exchange of views between IPBES members/NFPs, stakeholders, including IPLCs, and IPBES experts, using shared digital platforms, as appropriate.</p>	
<p>R05 Strengthen the role of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel in promoting scientific integrity and coherence across all the objectives of IPBES, while also engaging with the scientific community and other knowledge holders that are external to IPBES.</p>	<p>1. Consider how to further strengthen the role and responsibilities of MEP members in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Assessment processes including scoping o Selection and support to assessment authors, o Ensuring scientific integrity at the Plenary sessions o Inclusion of diverse knowledge systems o Identifying knowledge gaps and emerging scientific matters relevant to the IPBES work programme o Leadership and co-ordination of Objectives 2, 3 and 4 <p>2. Consider the need for enhanced induction, orientation, mentoring, and training to enable all MEP members to fulfil their respective roles.</p> <p>3. Ensure support is available for MEP members assigned to leadership roles for each of the IPBES objectives⁷¹ and their TFs.</p> <p>4. Improve and support engagement of MEP with key external science-policy institutions, including engagement with relevant regional bodies on matters within the remit of the MEP, in consultation with the Bureau and the secretariat.</p> <p>5. Raise the profile of the roles and responsibilities of MEP members by increasing visibility, transparency and acknowledgement of their contributions to IPBES products.</p>	<p>Yes (-)</p>
<p>R06 Ensure that the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel is diverse in terms of discipline and gender, as well as regionally balanced, with expertise that is well aligned to the IPBES rolling work programme, and that it provides clear guidance and uses existing procedures transparently to promote continuity, multidisciplinary, and readiness for the tasks required.</p>	<p>1. Ensure nominees, and those who endorse nominations, are fully informed of the tasks, time commitments, funding arrangements and expertise needed for MEP roles, including through regional informal consultation meetings.</p> <p>2. Invite the outgoing MEP to provide advice on the types of expertise needed for the forthcoming work of the MEP to support the nomination and selection process for the new MEP.</p> <p>3. Maintain efforts to promote continuity by retaining some MEP members across two terms of office to preserve institutional memory</p> <p>4. Develop more comprehensive handover protocols between outgoing and incoming MEP members.</p> <p>5. To support the nomination of MEP experts by regions, NFPs could consider inviting stakeholders to suggest potential candidates, based on the selection criteria stipulated in rule 26, for review and possible endorsement by the NFP.</p>	<p>Probably (-)</p>

⁷¹ Building on the experience of MEP members providing oversight for IPBES functions on knowledge generation and policy support in place of task forces.

		6. Improve regional consultation processes on selection of MEP members and undertake discussions in a step-by-step manner during Plenary sessions, sharing summaries of expertise and gender of proposed experts at each step, to help regions address any gaps and imbalances that are emerging in the selection process.	
R07	Strengthen Multidisciplinary Expert Panel capabilities by mobilizing additional expertise across IPBES and engaging with external partners.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Invite experts who take on the role of TF co-chairs to provide scientific and technical advice to the MEP, within the mandate of their respective TFs, and to provide regular updates on the work of the TF, as needed. 2. Improve engagement with representatives of UN partners and MEAs, that have observer status to the MEP in joint bureau and MEP meetings, to enhance their advice to MEP on technical and scientific matters, policy relevance and coordination. 3. Invite MEP to consult with representatives of the secretariats of relevant MEAs, such as CBD, on an ad hoc basis, to further align IPBES work with policy needs. 4. Invite MEP to consult with 'resource persons' and/or arrange technical workshops on specific topics to expand their knowledge base or to address knowledge gaps, as needed. 	Probably (-)
R08	Manage the workload of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel more strategically by sequencing tasks, clarifying responsibilities and providing targeted support, so that members can sustain high-quality contributions across assessments, Plenary processes and emerging needs.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Endeavour to sequence key tasks (e.g., expert selection, scoping, and Plenary sessions) to avoid too many overlapping demands on the MEP. 2. Clarify time commitments and share responsibilities across the MEP, enabling all members to contribute to the best of their abilities. 3. Explore further means to enhance secretariat support to the MEP to reduce administrative burdens, for example in processes to support the evaluation of expert CVs. 4. Ensure the Plenary is informed of capacity constraints within the MEP when approving new elements of the work programme. 	Yes (-)
R09	Foster deeper discussions, balanced participation and improved coordination with observers during Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and Bureau meetings to provide strategic direction to the implementation of the work programme.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Further engage observers from UN partners and MEAs, during MEP and Bureau meetings, to further improve alignment of work programmes and promote policy relevance and uptake of outputs. 2. Provide timely documentation for MEP and Bureau meetings to enable preparation and efficient discussions. 3. Consider rearranging joint MEP and Bureau meeting agendas to allow for additional time to discuss in more depth substantive matters. 4. Consider having smaller facilitated working groups to consult with assessment co-chairs, TF co-chairs, secretariat and TSUs, and observers, as appropriate, during joint MEP and Bureau meetings, to enable in-depth discussion on particular topics including emerging issues and evolving policy needs. 5. Ensure full and balanced participation of MEP members in the discussion during meetings, with active encouragement from the MEP co-chairs. 	Yes (-)

		6. Re-consider giving priority to holding both MEP and Bureau meetings each year in-person, subject to availability of resources. ⁷²	
R10	Further develop and provide induction, training and targeted support to enable Bureau members to fulfil their leadership, administrative, financial and representational responsibilities consistently and credibly.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide enhanced induction activities for new Bureau members, covering in more depth IPBES rules and procedures, the work programme, institutional structures, and key aspects of administration and finance as well as their expected roles. 2. Continue targeted training in skills such as chairing Plenary sessions and working groups and guiding Plenary deliberations. 3. Encourage Bureau members in their roles as regional representatives, with secretariat assistance, as appropriate, in communication and engagement with IPBES members and NFPs. 4. Enable the Bureau to provide timely and appropriate guidance on programme planning to support the matching of workloads to resources, such as staffing and financial capacity, using planning tools as appropriate. 5. Further encourage the Bureau to develop and extend partnerships, in line with the existing guidelines.⁷³ 	Yes (-)
R11	Strengthen the role of national focal points as core actors in IPBES, by ensuring that they are well informed, adequately supported by IPBES and enabled to engage with experts, stakeholders and diverse knowledge systems.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide materials and information to assist IPBES members and NFPs in advancing the institutional support and dedicated resources necessary for NFPs to perform their functions effectively. 2. Acknowledge and encourage IPBES members in strengthening the crucial bridging role of NFPs in connecting IPBES with relevant national government entities, stakeholder groups, expert communities and knowledge holders of diverse knowledge systems at national level. 3. Further strengthen NFP capacity through targeted training on IPBES procedures, deliverables, and effective stakeholder engagement, including review processes of IPBES products. Provide equitable access to training in online formats, across all time zones, as well as in-person, if appropriate. 4. Facilitate regional peer-learning and exchange among NFPs to share experiences and good practices with support by relevant institutions as needed. 5. Explore the role of informal regional information exchange events for IPBES members and NFPs and other relevant stakeholders, tailored to regional circumstances, to share experiences and to help develop capacity within IPBES members, especially for new NFPs. 6. Encourage NFPs for different MEAs and science-policy platforms to communicate and collaborate regularly to foster greater coherence and synergy within the country 	Yes (-)

⁷² Taking into account the suggestion 18(b) from IPBES/9/INF/21: Lessons learned from online meetings and other online working practices

⁷³ Decision 3/4 annex III

		7. Update the "IPBES manual for National Focal Points" ⁷⁴ to incorporate national experiences and reflect diverse national circumstances and arrangements, making the manual more relevant and useful for NFPs liaising with IPBES.	
R12	Enhance the opportunities for collaboration with United Nations strategic partners, relevant multilateral environmental agreements and other international science-policy interfaces to align programmes, share information and tools, and secure the uptake of IPBES products.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage the secretariat, with guidance from the Bureau, to further engage in bilateral communication with UN partners and other MEAs, as well as science-policy platforms, to increase efficiency, identify challenges, limitations, review existing MoUs and identify needs and opportunities for stronger engagement and collaboration. 2. Ensure that specific MEA requirements and needs, including timing, concepts and language, are considered within the scoping and preparation of assessments, involving the subsidiary scientific bodies, secretariat and/or other experts in scoping and review, as appropriate. 3. Further develop collaboration (co-design, co-funding, co-delivery) with UN partners across all IPBES functions: assessing knowledge, capacity-building, data and knowledge management, ILK and policy support, scenarios and models 4. Continue engagement with the liaison officer of IPCC in line with the decision IPBES-11/1. 5. Establish connections with relevant regional bodies such as CBD's regional technical and science support centres, as appropriate. 	Yes (-)
R13	Further improve the scoping and planning of assessments, ensuring geographical and disciplinary balance of experts, including engagement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and the intended policy users, considering the coherence of internal support arrangements for the assessment, and promoting open and transparent review.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure the representation of regions and subregions, relevant scientific disciplines and knowledge systems, policy experts and practitioners at global and national levels, as well as gender balance, when nominating and selecting scoping experts. 2. Allow sufficient time and resources for integrating multiple knowledge systems and cross-chapter co-ordination in scoping and assessment planning. 3. Consider specific processes for incorporating policy relevance and impact in assessments, such as, workshops, liaison arrangements, policy orientated deliverables, outreach activities and impact metrics. 4. Provide sufficient flexibility in scoping reports for authors to adjust assessment chapters, if necessary, taking into account further inputs on evolving policy needs. 5. Continue to facilitate open and transparent review of scoping reports to ensure the sound methodological foundations, organization and policy relevance of assessments. 6. Identify the support arrangements needed for each assessment including the role, size and technical requirements of the dedicated assessment TSU as well as the support to be provided by the TSUs of other IPBES functions. 	Yes (-)

⁷⁴ IPBES (2021): IPBES Manual for National Focal Points. Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, Bonn, Germany. 20 pp.

R14	<p>Give further attention to achieving multidisciplinary and regional and gender balance when nominating and selecting assessment authors. Ensure that all types of expertise and knowledge needed for the assessment are represented through inclusive and transparent selection and gap filling, avoiding any systemic or unintended bias, recognizing the diversity of expertise and experiences to be considered. In particular, attention should be given to the representation of regions and subregions, relevant scientific disciplines, Indigenous and local knowledge, as well as that of other knowledge systems, and policy practitioners.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage NFPs and stakeholders to seek and endorse expert nominations across the full range of expertise and knowledge required, as set out in the scoping report. 2. Make further efforts to ensure potential nominees and their host institutions are aware of the work commitments, way of working and also the opportunities and benefits to be gained from participation in IPBES.⁷⁵ 3. Consider engaging more contributing authors to fill specific gaps in expertise being identified during the assessment process, by facilitating contributions of knowledge which have been documented in languages other than English and by reaching out to experts from relevant communities of practice. 	No
R15	<p>Ensure that all experts are fully engaged and equipped to perform effectively within the teams of assessment authors and review editors by the provision of mentoring, training and capacity-building, as necessary, in consultation with the capacity-building, data and knowledge management, and scenarios and modelling task forces and with the support of the dedicated technical support units, as appropriate.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Undertake a review of capacity gaps within the author group and enhance guidance and training on understanding of IPBES principles and procedures, code of conduct, management skills of co-chairs and co-ordinating lead authors, advanced data management, literature reviews and use of AI, Plenary consultations, media handling and outreach, as needed. 2. Develop and implement evaluation of satisfaction and engagement of assessment authors of each assessment and report to MEP and Bureau during and upon completion of an assessment. 3. Strengthen the role of the MEP in supporting the engagement and overseeing of IPBES experts, ensuring their engagement and performance align with the “code of conduct of IPBES experts.”⁷⁶ This includes providing guidance on expert dismissal, replacement, role assignment, capacity development, and performance monitoring. A co-chair of MEP, assisted by one or two additional members of the MEP to give regional, gender, and disciplinary balance, could provide advice and guidance for management committees, co-chairs, co-ordinating lead authors, authors and review editors and help to resolve any issues arising within author teams, as required. The 	No

⁷⁵ For example, a collation of experiences of experts and their host institutions of working in IPBES and the benefits gained, taking into account efforts done through the Second Global Assessment flyer: Become an IPBES expert!

⁷⁶ Code of Conduct for IPBES experts (https://files.ipbes.net/ipbes-web-prod-public-files/2023-02/Code_of_conduct_for_IPBES_experts.pdf)

		assigned MEP co-chair could also provide overview reports on selection, engagement and performance to the Plenary, including feedback from authors.	
R16	Improve the ease and transparency of assessment review procedures through the adoption of new tools and frameworks.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore more flexible approaches to the confidentiality of draft documents to allow for engagement with a wider range of reviewers, taking into account confidentiality issues arising from the emergence and use of new technologies. 2. Explore ways to facilitate the review process both for reviewers and NFPs including by providing additional opportunities such as dialogue workshops and training. 3. Update the "IPBES manual for National Focal Points" with emphasis on the arrangements for and purpose of the review process. 4. Further expand communication and outreach towards experts with backgrounds in economics, social sciences, the humanities and business. 5. Develop and use tools for better synthesising and prioritising reviewer comments, learning from experiences in other science-policy platforms. 6. Provide timely feedback on review comments to NFPs and stakeholders. 	Probably (-)
R17	Address policy relevance and effectively collaborate with policy customers at all stages of the assessment process, from scoping and literature review to authorship of individual assessment chapters, formulation of the summary for policymakers, external peer review, adoption by the Plenary, and communications, as well as in post-assessment processes such as outreach, support for policy uptake and evaluation of impacts. Design and structure the summary for policymakers, fact sheets, and briefing papers for policy audiences using appropriate language and concepts, addressing specific policy needs and questions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enable ongoing liaison arrangements between assessment authors and key policy customers⁷⁷ and/or establish a small, time-limited external policy advisory group for each assessment. 2. Enhance opportunities for policymakers during external review of an assessment to engage with the assessment authors to discuss policy context, specific policy needs and questions, identify relevant sources of data and knowledge and suggest indicators to evaluate policy impacts. 3. Enhance the role of the MEP and Bureau, with the support from the policy support TSU as well as the assessment TSUs, in advising on policy relevance during the drafting and review of assessment chapters, the SPMs, as well as on post-assessment uptake processes. 4. Strengthen regional and sub-regional support to enhance policy uptake and meet capacity-building needs in collaboration with relevant entities such as CBD's regional technical and science support centres. 5. Further develop tools to improve digital access to assessment reports so that policy users or science-policy intermediaries may more easily extract assessment findings tailored to specific audiences. 6. Further consider cost-effective approaches to evaluate policy uptake and impacts of each assessment and report to Plenary over a timescale of 1 - 3 years following completion of an assessment. 	Yes (-)

⁷⁷ Key policy customers e.g. MEAs that have requested IPBES to undertake assessments on specific topics (e.g. CBD, CMS). These may be specified within scoping reports.

R18	<p>Ensure that effective and tailored technical support is available to the assessment author teams through all stages of the assessment process from start-up to outreach and policy uptake. Efforts should be made to avoid delays in setting up assessment technical support units and loss of support and institutional memory of technical support units when assessments are completed.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Undertake early onboarding of assessment TSUs (including team building with assessment co-chairs and authors and other relevant TSUs) to enhance engagement and inclusivity. 2. Ensure a match between the tasks to be undertaken within the assessment TSU and the resources available. 3. Review the inputs and time contributions of all TSUs to each assessment during and after its completion to adjust and plan future support arrangements. 4. Broaden the scope, and extend the operational period, of assessment TSUs to support post-assessment process for uptake activities, in collaboration with the policy support and scenarios and models TSUs, as well as, other relevant TFs and TSUs. 5. Explore alternatives for hosting a time-limited multi-assessment TSU which could support post-assessment uptake activities. Such a TSU could be hosted in the secretariat, in one or more other countries, or in rotation between regional partnerships, having a duration of two or more assessment cycles. 	Yes (-)
R19	<p>Further improve the coherence and delivery of IPBES work programme objectives 2, 3 and 4 (building capacity, strengthening the knowledge foundations and supporting policy) by strengthening leadership and liaison roles, enhancing communications and cross-functional services, securing predictable resources and aligning work plans with those resources.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Leadership and engagement</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Re-affirm the leadership role of the MEP and Bureau⁷⁸ in guiding and supporting the work of TFs and TSUs, including improved coordination of their activities and more effective use of resources, ensuring efficiency, driving greater coherence, avoiding duplication, and closing gaps in the delivery of the work programme as whole. 2. Foresee one or two experts from each TF to co-chair the TF alongside the MEP or Bureau members,¹¹ to strengthen technical leadership, credibility, and coordination. 3. Encourage further engagement with external experts (resource persons), where necessary to fill gaps in the available expertise within TFs and TSUs, and acknowledge their contributions, where appropriate and feasible. 4. Explore means to improve engagement between TFs and IPBES members/NFPs and stakeholders, with the support of MEP and Bureau, ensuring equal opportunities for all regions and subregions to engage. <p style="text-align: center;">Coordination and collaboration</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Start collaboration early to define roles and contributions of TFs and TSUs to assessments, including during the scoping phase. 	Probably (-)

⁷⁸ The MEP and Bureau oversee the implementation of the complete work programme, and they have established management committees for each deliverable. The management committees contain the co-chairs of the TF and additional MEP/Bureau members.

		<p>6. Seek opportunities to align priorities and sustain engagement within and between TFs and TSUs, including more frequent face-to-face meetings and exchange of current information and plans, as required, subject to available resources.</p> <p>Work planning and review</p> <p>7. Maintain a regular review of work programmes and resources, consulting and adjusting work, if needed.</p> <p>8. Develop performance indicators that measure the coherence of the objectives 2, 3 and 4.</p> <p>9. Develop and implement approaches to preserve institutional knowledge and promote continuity in the work of TFs and TSUs for objectives 2, 3 and 4, including through nomination and selection processes for experts, according to rules and procedures.</p> <p>10. Invite the MEP and Bureau to undertake a review of the use of performance indicators to ensure they address key deliverables in the work programme and focus on meaningful outcomes, where possible.</p>	
R20	<p>Further strengthen the capacity-building function (objective 2), broadening engagement, enabling effective participation in IPBES processes across all regions and subregions, enabling more efficient, effective and inclusive IPBES Plenary sessions and enabling the uptake and use of IPBES products by IPBES members and stakeholders at national and regional levels. Collaborate closely with assessment technical support units and the task forces and technical support unit for Indigenous and local knowledge, policy support, and scenarios and models, as well as external partners, including United Nations strategic partners and multilateral environmental agreements with similar needs.</p>	<p>1. Establish effective liaison arrangements between the capacity-building TSU and other relevant entities, such as CBD's regional technical and science support centres, to increase regional reach, seek cost-effective delivery mechanisms for capacity-building related to implementation of the IPBES work programme and improve engagement in IPBES reviews and preparatory processes.</p> <p>2. Maintain and develop effective liaison arrangements between the capacity-building TSU and other IPBES TSUs.</p> <p>3. Make arrangements to provide appropriate induction, orientation, mentoring and training to enable MEP and Bureau members to fulfil their respective roles.</p> <p>4. Review the use of indicators to assess the adequacy of current capacity-building activities to meet the needs of NFPs, experts, MEP, Bureau, and other stakeholders, in line with the recommendation R28.</p> <p>5. Ensure the IPBES Capacity-building Forum remains fit for purpose as a mechanism for exchange, collaboration, and learning across regions and subregions and stakeholder groups. This includes adopting online formats that enable efficient and inclusive participation, facilitating the sharing of information on national and regional measures for the uptake of IPBES outputs, and promoting equitable access, translation, accessible digital platforms, and different time zones, as appropriate. Continue to seek feedback from participants to inform continuous improvement of the Forum's design, content, and outcomes.</p>	Probably (-)
R21	<p>Ensure that the internal working arrangements of the task force on data and knowledge management (objective 3</p>	<p>1. Improve internal coordination and leadership by forming smaller, topic-specific working groups and assigning task leaders from among TF members. Appoint one or two expert co-chairs to lead the TF alongside MEP and Bureau members,</p>	Probably (-)

	<p>(a)) are effective in enabling information exchange and supporting coherent and synergistic collaboration across IPBES functions. The task force and the dedicated technical support unit should undertake continuous scans and technical reviews on technical advances and, where necessary, develop further guidance on advances in data management and analysis methods and tools to inform and streamline relevant processes in IPBES, particularly in ongoing assessments. Additional invited experts/resource persons could help the task force to consider new technologies and data management systems, across the full scope of IPBES activities.</p>	<p>enabling direct reporting to the MEP on progress and new technical developments relevant to data and knowledge management as needed, including associated operational and reputational risks.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Enhance collaboration with the assessment TSUs and assessment experts to ensure well-planned, flexible, and timely engagement on emerging issues, particularly those related to data and knowledge management, AI, and other digital tools used in literature reviews and assessment drafting. 3. Enhance collaboration with the knowledge generation catalysis TSU by identifying and assessing relevant datasets and knowledge products and strengthen cooperation frameworks for data sharing, interoperability, and joint knowledge generation with UN partners, relevant MEAs, and science-policy platforms, other international bodies and knowledge holders with a role in knowledge generation. 4. Engage external resource persons with specialised technical expertise to advise the TF and TSU as required, ensuring formal acknowledgement of their contributions. 5. Undertake continuous technical scans and reviews to monitor advances in data management, AI, and analytical methods, updating IPBES guidance and procedures as necessary to ensure methodological consistency and innovation across assessments. 6. Establish a process within the TF, supported by the TSU, to maintain the currency of the forthcoming Code of Practice for the Use of New Technologies, considering emerging technologies and practices and ensuring coherence with IPBES confidentiality rules and alignment with best practices from comparable organizations. 7. Review the use of indicators to monitor progress on the work of the TF, the coordination with the assessment TSU and other, objective-specific TSUs and TFs in line with recommendation R28. 	
R22	<p>Enhance the knowledge generation catalysis function (objective 3 (a)) and invite the Bureau to review the current working arrangements for direct oversight by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau, with support from the recently established technical support unit, before the next Plenary session, addressing the following matters: the resources available to the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel to undertake the work; the connections with the task force on data and knowledge management; and collaboration with United Nations</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and, if necessary, strengthen institutional arrangements for knowledge generation catalysis, with particular attention to enhancing synergies between the TSUs on policy support and on data and knowledge management. 2. Identify critical knowledge gaps at the scoping stage and throughout assessment cycles. Promote their early communication to the research and funding communities, considering how approval and confidentiality requirements could be adapted to enable timely disclosure of such information, while maintaining scientific integrity and legitimacy. 3. Build clearer narratives on the multidisciplinary knowledge needed by IPBES, including social sciences, humanities, and diverse knowledge systems, to improve regional and thematic balance and alignment with IPBES priorities and enable engagement with a broader range of research funders and programmes. 4. Review use of indicators to monitor progress on the knowledge generation function of IPBES, including the assessment of progress made in shaping research funding 	Probably (-)

strategic partners, relevant multilateral environmental agreements, and science-policy platforms, other international bodies and knowledge holders with a role in knowledge generation.	strategies coordination with other entities and filling gaps identified in line with recommendation R28.	
R23 Strengthen recognition and integration of Indigenous and local knowledge and diverse knowledge systems (objective 3 (b)) in all IPBES processes, embed Indigenous and local knowledge early and consistently into assessments and further improve institutional arrangements to support the effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Further explore long-term mechanisms for the enhanced, systematic and equitable integration of ILK and diverse knowledge systems by engaging IPLCs and other knowledge holders and experts into all workstreams. This could include collaboration with relevant partner initiatives, organizations and regional hubs, and sustained dialogue processes to promote continuity, trust-building, and culturally appropriate engagement. 2. Introduce peer mentoring and induction programmes for new IPBES members and, with capacity-building TSU as well as ILK TSU, on the recognition and integration of ILK and other diverse knowledge systems in IPBES deliverables and its translation into policy and practice, as appropriate based on national circumstances. Such activities could also promote awareness of ethical engagement, fair compensation, and cultural mediation when working with knowledge holders. 3. Further analyse structural and procedural barriers to engagement of IPLCs and other knowledge holders and consider measures to address them within future IPBES assessments and stakeholder engagement processes, including through ILK dialogue workshops, as appropriate. 4. Continue providing policy relevant scientific information and knowledge to leverage the implementation of Article 8(j) of CBD and relevant targets of the KMGBF to strengthen coherence between IPBES work and biodiversity-related policy-making by recognizing the importance of ILK and other diverse knowledge systems. 5. Improve internal and external communication to make ILK contributions more visible within IPBES products. Provide relevant information to promote the development of materials by partners that can raise awareness of the value of ILK and other diverse knowledge systems. 6. Strengthen collaboration between the ILK TF and other TFs and TSUs to ensure systematic recognition, integration, and appropriate ways to access and use diverse knowledge systems throughout IPBES processes and products, including for example joint planning sessions, shared tools, and cross-TF learning exchanges. 7. Ensure that expertise on diverse knowledge systems, not limited to ILK, is represented within or available to the ILK TF to enable the TF to support the co-production of knowledge across disciplines and cultures in collaboration with other IPBES bodies. 8. Encourage further engagement of IPLCs and other diverse knowledge holders in national review processes and preparatory meetings for Plenary sessions. 	Probably (-)

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Develop culturally appropriate preparatory materials, including promoting translation into relevant languages, where possible. 10. Review the use of indicators to monitor progress towards better coordination between IPBES objectives related to this TSU, in line with recommendation R28. 	
R24	<p>Strengthen the policy support function (objective 4 (a)) by improving engagement with key policy users at global levels (e.g., the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa); promoting informal policy dialogues with IPBES members and other stakeholders at regional levels; defining clearer roles and increasing collaboration and co-delivery with assessment author teams, expert task forces and technical support units; and developing and implementing methods for evaluation of policy impacts of IPBES assessments. Invite the Bureau to further consider working arrangements for delivery of the function, including consideration of an ad hoc policy expert group, and/or policy/practice-oriented workshops linked to specific assessments and other products, and/or re-establishment of a policy support task force.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include policy experts and scenario and modelling experts in the scoping and assessment processes, to provide orientation towards policy needs and contribute to the development of conceptual models that support the inclusion of policy-relevant scenarios with the support of relevant IPBES TSUs. 2. Collaborate with organizations and other initiatives that bridge the gap between science and policy⁷⁹ in order to promote the use of IPBES findings, particularly at the national, sub-regional and regional levels. 3. Improve methods for evaluation of policy impacts of IPBES including possible indicators, explore ways to improve the impact tracking database (TRACK), including its design, for the systematic tracking of the impact of IPBES on policy at all levels, with a view to making it more widely and consistently used and validated. 4. Explore the establishment of a community of practice around policy integration and relevance of IPBES products with NFPs, experts from political sciences, MEAs and UN partners and other initiatives that can support bridging the gap between science and policy. 5. Review the use of indicators to better reflect the cross-cutting role of this function inside of IPBES, in line with recommendation R28. 	Probably (-)
R25	<p>Provide advice and support on appropriate and consistent use of scenarios and models (objective 4 (b)) in IPBES assessments, including the use of the Nature Futures Framework, with a</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collaborate with author teams to co-ordinate the use of scenarios and models in assessments, presenting possible future trajectories of biodiversity and related policy options in accessible ways for policy audiences. 2. Promote targeted support and capacity-building opportunities for IPBES members, NFPs, and other audiences to improve understanding and use of scenarios and 	Probably (-)

⁷⁹ Global Strategic Communications Council (GSCC) as an example of such organizations

	<p>stronger policy and practical orientation of the work of the task force on scenarios and models supporting uptake and application in policy and decision-making, including in relation to the Convention on Biological Diversity and other relevant multilateral environmental agreements. Explore opportunities for collaboration with other bodies that develop or use relevant scenarios and models to ensure synergies, promote consistency and avoid duplication.</p>	<p>models in the uptake of IPBES assessments. This may include informal dialogues, online or in-person training and tailored guidance materials developed in collaboration with relevant strategic partners and TSUs.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Strengthen scientific and technical collaboration with the wider scientific community, relevant MEAs, and other science-policy bodies to improve efficiency, innovation and coherence in integrating biodiversity and ecosystem dimensions into scenario and model development. 4. Continue to nurture and collaborate with the community of practice to extend the uptake and application of the IPBES conceptual framework and the NFF and regularly report to the MEP on progress and lessons learned. 5. Review the use of indicators to better reflect the cross-cutting role of this function inside of IPBES, in line with recommendation R28. 	
R26	<p>Streamline communications across and between all elements of the IPBES work programme, all IPBES bodies, strategic partners, national focal points and stakeholders so that communications are more effective at promoting engagement across the network and avoid information overload.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve the IPBES website by aligning it with the priority audiences⁸⁰ and their needs, tailoring design of user pathways and products, seeking continuous feedback, monitoring impact and continuing development to ensure accessibility, usability, and impact. 2. Simplify interactions with NFPs by streamlining internal communications, with clarity on their purpose and target audiences within IPBES. 3. Supplement individual notifications with consolidated updates (e.g., newsletters) to streamline communication and minimise misunderstanding as well as to avoid information overload. 4. Expand external communication activities to include outward-facing work of TSUs to provide a holistic view across all IPBES functions. 5. Consider accommodating different time zones while organizing online meetings (e.g., workshops, webinars, conferences) to increase inclusivity and participation. 	Yes (-)
R27	<p>Further orientate, design and target external communications towards specific policy audiences and actors at global, regional and national levels with a view to informing their decisions and raising the profile of IPBES.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tailor communication products (e.g., short videos, translations, targeted fact sheets, visuals, regional case studies, examples of policy impact) to make IPBES outputs more usable, including at regional and national levels. 2. Support NFPs and stakeholders in strengthening national communication by providing materials for the development of local-language briefs, infographics, roadshows, and interactive tools for communities, policymakers, and sectoral actors, in collaboration with member countries, assessment authors, review editors, and/or other relevant partners, as appropriate. 3. Enhance collaboration with UN partners and relevant MEAs to develop communication campaigns and products, ensuring coherent, reinforcing messages to targeted global audiences. 	Yes (-)

⁸⁰ Approved IPBES Communications Strategy

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Leverage IPBES expert contributions to develop communication materials that enhance the accuracy, consistency, and ownership of IPBES messaging. 5. Continue to develop the IPBES 'brand' as a legitimate and authoritative, knowledge-based voice on biodiversity and nature's contributions to people, to raise awareness of IPBES and IPBES products and promote wide support for action. 	
R28	<p>Establish a structured and participatory monitoring and evaluation framework to enable the Plenary to regularly assess the performance and impact of IPBES activities across all components, including assessments, task forces, technical support units and stakeholder engagement, using a logic model and clear indicators that capture both outputs and outcomes. This framework should enable adaptive learning, improve coordination and transparency across IPBES functions and ensure that lessons from assessments and outreach efforts systematically inform continuous improvement of the Platform's effectiveness.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clarify the purpose and use of indicators for all aspects of IPBES work and anchor them in a clear monitoring and evaluation framework.⁸¹ 2. Review and consider needs for SMART⁸² indicators through a participatory process identifying synergies between IPBES objectives, under the leadership of the MEP and Bureau, as appropriate. 3. Review current performance indicators for objectives 2, 3 and 4⁸³ using a consistent monitoring and evaluation framework across all IPBES functions and consider the need for additional indicators for tangible outcomes and impacts. 4. Establish clear feedback loops and learning mechanisms within IPBES workstreams by clarifying review cycles (e.g., annual, midterm, end-of cycle) and defining dedicated learning review sessions (e.g., during joint MEP and Bureau meeting) 5. Produce learning notes highlighting key lessons learned and successful outcomes, ensuring the Plenary is fully informed for future planning and decision-making. 6. Use programme and performance data to link expenditure to concrete impacts, enabling IPBES members and stakeholders to examine the value for money provided by Plenary decisions on the work programme. 7. Integrate dedicated surveys within the monitoring and evaluation framework and periodic reviews of the effectiveness of the work programme. 8. Use and, if necessary, further develop outcome- and impact-based indicators in the monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the visibility, uptake, and impact of communication and engagement activities, including results from stakeholder surveys. 	Probably (-)
R29	<p>In planning for the final review of the current rolling work programme and reviews of future IPBES work programmes, establish the external review panel earlier in the review cycle (to cover a session of the Plenary and full intersessional period), to allow for a fuller</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that adequate resources are made available to support the external review, including, if possible, two face-to-face meetings, opportunities for panel members to observe plenary and joint Bureau and MEP meetings as well as conduct interview sessions and surveys as well as the analysis of the findings. 2. Ensure that the tasks, responsibilities and time demands of the external review panel are made clear in the notification requesting nominations for the external panel. 	Yes (-)

⁸¹ Examples of renown frameworks Logical Framework (Logframe), Theory of Change (ToC) or Results-Based Management (RBM)

⁸² SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time bounded

⁸³ Annex VIII to decision IPBES-11/1

	period of engagement and observation, enabling interaction between the internal and external components of review and avoiding duplication in gathering information, and ensuring that results from the monitoring and evaluation framework are available to those conducting the review process.	3. Co-ordinate surveys and interviews undertaken by the internal and external reviews and stakeholder surveys, to reduce burdens on respondents and secretariat and to provide a coherent, shared information resource for review processes.	
R30	Implement flexible, modern and efficient procurement systems to meet the needs of IPBES.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to explore with UNEP opportunities for improvements to their administrative systems and consult with host institutions of TSUs as appropriate, and report back to the Plenary. 2. Explore ways to improve small-scale procurement processes such as setting up guidelines as well as acquiring corporate credit cards for the use of the secretariat. 	Yes (+)
R31	Vigorously pursue a structured and proactive fundraising strategy that broadens the donor base beyond the current limited set of contributors. Make efforts to increase the number of IPBES members making regular funding contributions and the amount of funding provided. Further promote opportunities for in-kind contributions and provide full recognition of such offers. Pursue funding contributions from the private sector, ensuring that clear safeguards are in place to protect scientific independence and prevent conflicts of interest.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide information and communication materials that demonstrate the value, utility and impact of IPBES, and the efficiency, effectiveness and inclusivity of its work and procedures, to make the case for investing in IPBES, targeted at different audiences, including IPBES member governments. 2. Raise the threshold value for private sector contributions to ensure more meaningful and significant engagement. 3. Explore the possibility for 'soft earmarking' with necessary safeguard measures — whereby contributions are directed to broad categories such as capacity-building or communication or a specific assessment — to reconcile donor preferences with institutional integrity. 4. Continue to explore ways to reduce delays in due diligence procedures and improve donor engagement timelines. 5. Review IPBES decisions related to due diligence and donor engagement procedures to remove any unnecessary barriers. 6. Collaborate with UN partners (UNEP, UNDP, FAO, UNESCO) to gather information from similar bodies with fund-raising activities to enhance IPBES' funding capabilities and impact. 7. Invite Bureau members to support fund raising activities in their respective regions, as appropriate. 8. Reinforce the capacity of the fundraising function within the secretariat 9. Ask the Bureau, with the technical support of the secretariat, to propose measurable and time-bound targets for fundraising activities. 	Yes (+)
R32	Ensure transparency in the information on the budget provided to delegations attending sessions of the Plenary and provide updates to the Plenary on ongoing budget discussions to help all	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide regular budget group updates during Plenary sessions, including at regional group meetings, so that all participants are informed of ongoing budget discussions. 	No

	<p>participants to engage. In addition, consider providing high-level financial performance updates during the intersessional period to improve transparency and accountability, build trust among donors and stakeholders, and demonstrate the efficiency and impact of IPBES operations.</p>		
R33	<p>Ensure that the Plenary prioritizes elements of the rolling work programme and balances the ambition of the work programme with the available budgetary resources (and capacity), looking beyond the two-year budget time frame. Strategically manage elements of the work programme, including the number of concurrent assessments and the interval between sessions of the Plenary, to ensure the quality of the work undertaken by IPBES is maintained and to avoid operational bottlenecks and uneven or unsustainable workloads.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to develop the presentation of budget information, including costing of all proposed activities, potential trade-offs and budgetary trajectories, as appropriate, when elements of the future work programme are being discussed in Plenary working group sessions. 	No
R34	<p>Ensure and enhance the effectiveness and legitimacy of IPBES processes and products when proposing and approving the budget, by taking account of the need for financial provisions for equitable participation and greater inclusivity, while also recognizing the value of face-to-face meetings.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore means of providing travel support for delegations from developing countries to include a second delegate to attend Plenary sessions, if the organization of work on the agenda requires it. 2. Maintain support for experts from developing countries to facilitate their role as contributors to assessments and TFs, including support for their participation in Plenary sessions, if appropriate. 3. Explore possible extra-budgetary or in-kind funding mechanisms for participants from IPLCs, youth and fellows who are unable to self-fund and are not eligible for support from the Trust Fund.⁸⁴ 4. Encourage IPBES members and stakeholders, in a position to do so, to support the active engagement of relevant experts, including ILK holders in the work of IPBES, through monetary and/or in-kind contributions. 	Yes (-)

⁸⁴ Travel funding is available from the IPBES Trust Fund for participants from developing countries but not for those from developed countries

R35	<p>Ensure that the rolling work programme remains strategic, balanced and adaptive to emerging issues while consolidating existing deliverables and strengthening policy uptake. To maintain flexibility and scientific credibility amid shifting global contexts, IPBES should diversify its processes and products, including workshops, technical and synthesis reports and fact sheets to reach and engage different audiences; undertake a review of fast-track assessment procedures; and address emerging issues and futures within the scope of its work on assessments, capacity-building, knowledge and data management and scenarios and models, as appropriate.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Employ a wider range of IPBES processes and products, such as workshops, technical and synthesis reports and factsheets, to provide timely and tailored outputs to inform both well-established and emerging policy needs. 2. Invite the MEP and Bureau to undertake an internal review of the effectiveness of procedures for undertaking the fast-track assessments on the examples of the business and biodiversity,⁸⁵ monitoring biodiversity and nature's contributions to people and integrated, biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning and ecological connectivity⁸⁶ assessments to inform future decisions on the most appropriate procedure for preparing assessments. 3. Encourage the MEP and TFs to consider emerging biodiversity, socio-political, science-policy and technological issues when contributing to the review of IPBES scoping reports, draft assessment chapters and work plans. 	Yes
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⁸⁵ To be completed by IPBES 12

⁸⁶ Both to be completed by IPBES 13

Main audience matrix																																					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35		
Plenary																																					
MEP and Bureau																																					
NFPs																																					
Stakeholders																																					
MEAs and other entites																																					
Assessing knowledge																																					
Capacity building																																					
Data and knowledge management																																					
Knowledge generation catalysis																																					
ILK																																					
Policy support																																					
Scenarios and models																																					
Communication																																					
Monitoring and evaluation																																					
Secretariat																																					
Finance																																					

Figure 2 The main audience matrix illustrates the relationship between the recommendations and the relevant IPBES bodies and functions, indicating who may need to be involved in their successful implementation. The matrix is designed to reflect all potential implementation options associated with each recommendation

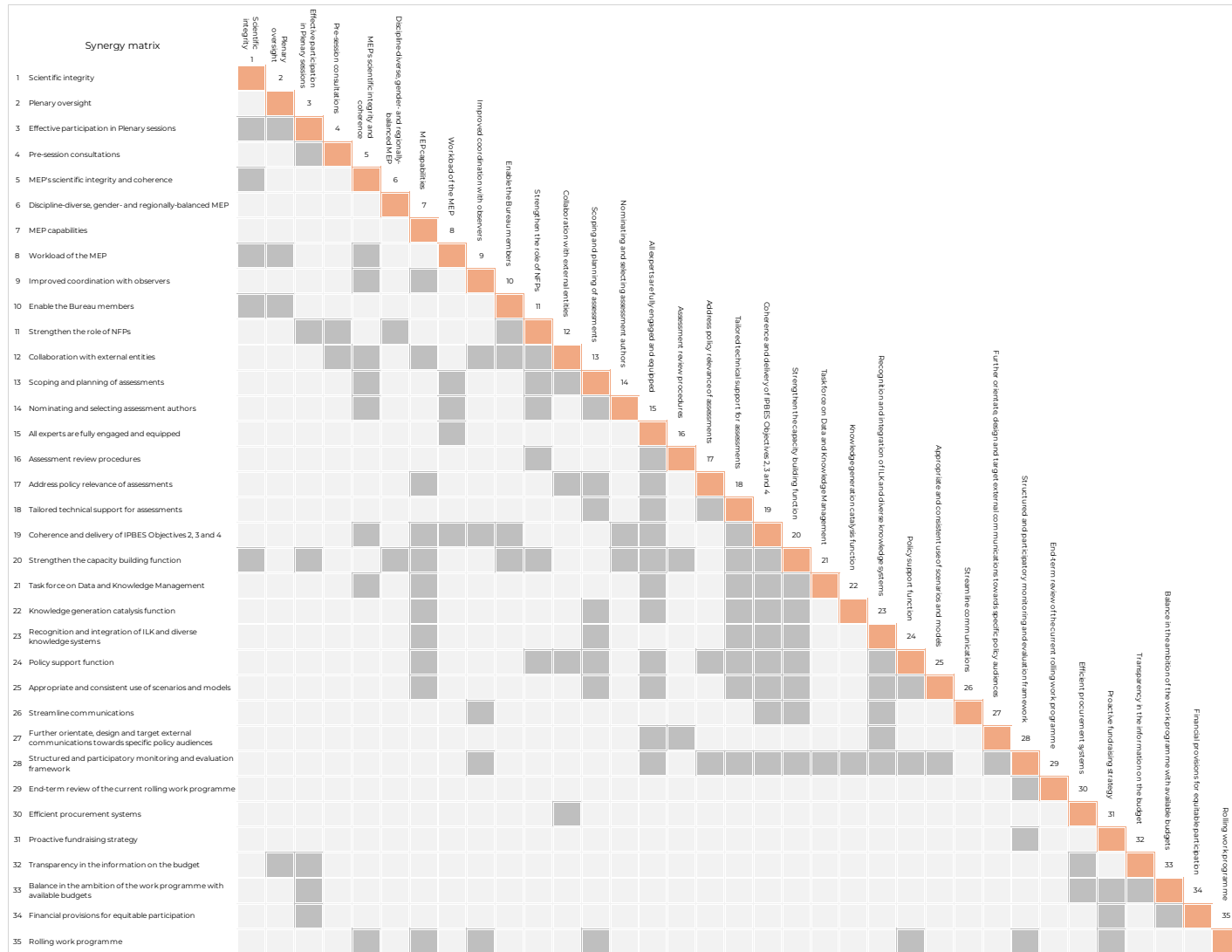


Figure 3 The synergy matrix illustrates the interactions between different recommendations, with darker grey shading indicating a higher potential for synergy. The matrix is designed to reflect all potential implementation options associated with each recommendation

Conclusions

Building on the internal review, the external review found that IPBES continues to uphold a high level of scientific integrity and independence across its assessments and other deliverables. IPBES has been extremely productive, completing five assessments within the time frame of the review, with four more assessments currently underway. IPBES has secured broad legitimacy, a strong reputation and increasing visibility. IPBES is recognized for breaking new ground in the integration of diverse knowledge systems, particularly Indigenous and local knowledge and achieving a high degree of inclusiveness in its procedures and processes. Yet, the feedback gathered during the review indicates that some imbalances in participation remain in relation to gender, disciplinary expertise and regions, suggesting that further efforts are needed to ensure equitable representation and engagement at all levels of the Platform.

While IPBES assessments enjoy global recognition and influence, for example, providing an evidence foundation for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the review found that additional translation of assessments findings was needed to support policy uptake and impact could be further strengthened through greater contextualisation, more timely communication and closer alignment with the needs of key conventions and frameworks. Delivering policy relevant products across scales from global to regional, sub-regional and national levels remains a challenge.

The effectiveness of IPBES depends on the coherence and coordination of its component parts. The Bureau, Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP), Task Forces (TFs), the secretariat and technical support units (TSUs) have shown exceptional commitment - working at a fast pace and carrying heavy burdens to deliver the demanding schedule of work mandated by the Plenary. Some issues were highlighted regarding the roles, interactions, leadership, coordination and capacity of these bodies and the processes for building, accumulating and retaining knowledge and expertise coherently across all the IPBES functions and objectives.

Resource and capacity constraints across IPBES pose fundamental challenges to the delivery of the ambitious work programme and full realisation of the IPBES operating principles. IPBES is highly reliant on voluntary funding contributions from a relatively small number of IPBES members, as well as, in-kind contributions from experts and their institutes, with a high degree of uncertainty and, currently, a forecast deficit. Sufficient, sustained, diversified and predictable funding is a pre-requisite for delivering an ambitious, high quality and inclusive work programme, building capacity and meeting the needs of IPBES members and stakeholders. Ambition in the work programme may need to be moderated if sufficient funds are not available but this should not be at the expense of scientific integrity and inclusive participation.

In response to these findings the review panel has prepared 35 recommendations, each supported by a number of possible implementation options. The recommendations and possible implementation options are based on the rich contributions to the external review, as interpreted and moderated by members of the panel. They are by no means prescriptive. They give ideas for all actors in IPBES to consider and react to. The recommendations are not

intended to be a coherent or fully-funded plan: indeed, they have budgetary implications, all of which cannot be accommodated under current financial limitations. Nevertheless, there are choices to be made about how IPBES delivers its work programme and the review panel hopes that these recommendations will be useful in making those choices. The review panel also noted many valuable discussions on the future IPBES work programme. However, it was not within the mandate of the panel to make recommendations on possible themes and emphasis in the future work programme.

From the 35 recommendations, the review panel has identified 11 priorities grouped into two broad categories: those addressing systemic matters concerning the way of working of the platform and those focused on ensuring the integrity and policy relevance in IPBES assessments and other products. The systemic recommendations include: reinforcing informal and regional preparatory processes for the Plenary (R04); strengthening the capacity and diversity of the MEP (R06); enhancing the capacity of NFPs while promoting equitable participation (R11 and R34); strengthening collaboration with other entities (R12); and, bridging the finance gap through a proactive and diversified fundraising strategy (R31). The second set of priority recommendations, concerning the integrity, policy relevance and impact of IPBES, include: improving the scoping and planning of assessments (R13); broadening the diversity of experts involved (R14); enhancing the policy relevance of assessments (R17); strengthening the policy-support function across all areas of IPBES work (R24); and, ensuring that the rolling work programme remains strategic, balanced and adaptive to emerging issues, while consolidating existing deliverables (R35).

The review panel emphasises that maintaining scientific excellence must go hand in hand with enhancing inclusiveness, procedural efficiency and providing policy relevant outputs. The Plenary may wish to consider asking the Bureau and the MEP, with advice from the secretariat, to develop an action plan in response to these recommendations, to select, prioritize and translate insights from the midterm review into practical, affordable and measurable steps, as appropriate. We also note that many of the matters highlighted here are already well understood and some are already being addressed by the secretariat, which continues to strengthen processes and improve support mechanisms despite operating under substantial workload and resource pressures. With multiple assessments underway, the demands placed on the secretariat, the Bureau, the MEP, NFPs and the Plenary are significant. The recommendations, with their implementation options, should therefore be read as contributions to serve as inputs for an informed deliberation concerning priorities, feasibility, and resourcing—recognizing that decisions on whether, how, and when to act rest fully with the Plenary, as well as, subsidiary bodies and other component parts of the Platform.

Annexes and Appendixes

Annex 1 Methodology

This external review of the IPBES rolling work programme up to 2030 used a multi-method qualitative design, consistent with guidance from Newing et al. (2010), to capture diverse insights from across the IPBES community. Methods included:

- Document and literature review,
- Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions,
- Online survey,
- Participatory observations.

The process was led by a 12-member independent external review panel (Appendix 1.1 Members of the review panel conducting the external part of the midterm review under the rolling work programme up to 2030 of IPBES) appointed by the IPBES Bureau, supported by a consultant facilitating coordination, data collection, and synthesis.

The external review process was launched with a three-day in-person kick-off meeting, held from 11 to 13 March 2025 at the UN Campus in Bonn, Germany.⁸⁷ The meeting brought together eleven of the twelve members of the external review panel (with one attending online), two representatives of the IPBES Secretariat, and one member of the Bureau.⁸⁸ It served to align expectations, build a shared understanding of the internal review findings, and define a common purpose and next steps for the review.

The meeting concluded with agreement on the sequencing of interviews, the survey rollout, and the organization of focus group discussions. It also included the nomination of the panel's co-chairs and addressed key technical considerations related to online working arrangements.

Introductory sessions were facilitated by the secretariat and the Bureau representative, offering a retrospective on IPBES activities under the rolling work programme up to 2030 and outlining the institutional and procedural context of the internal review findings.⁸⁹ Dedicated time was provided to discuss the review's Terms of Reference⁹⁰ and to jointly identify key questions to be addressed across IPBES's assessment, governance, and cross-cutting functions. Early discussions also focused on ethical and inclusivity considerations, particularly regarding the participation of IPLCs, NFPs, and underrepresented regions.

⁸⁷ IPBES/REV/2025/1/3 Report of the Meeting of the Review Panel for the external part of the midterm review under the rolling work programme up to 2030 of IPBES and Provisional agenda, annotations and organization of work

⁸⁸ IPBES/REV/2025/Other/1 List of participants

⁸⁹ Summarised in IPBES/11/INF/22

⁹⁰ Annex IX to decision IPBES-10/1

Document and literature review

A targeted document review was conducted to provide contextual grounding and support the triangulation of the data collected. The list of review literature is presented in Appendix 1.2 Document and literature review. The literature informed the design of interview protocols and survey instruments, provided a basis for indicator analysis (Annex 4 Analysis of IPBES indicators), and provided a historical lens for evaluating institutional progress since the last external review. Based on the review of IPBES documents.

Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions

Between June 11th and July 16th, 2025, the review panel conducted eight semi-structured interviews and 17 focus group discussions covering eight different audience groups with 125 participants.

Audience group	number of participants
IPBES Members/NFPs	42
Bureau and MEP members	26
Secretariat personnel	6
TFs and TSUs including:	
• Capacity-building	
• Data and knowledge management	
• Indigenous and local knowledge	25
• Knowledge generation catalysis	
• Policy support	
• Scenarios and models	
Assessment authors	6
Indigenous and local knowledge holders	6
Former and current MEA representatives	2
Nongovernmental Stakeholder	12

To maintain consistency and reduce bias the interview guide was co-developed by the panel members. The interview guide included a set of facilitation tips and ethical considerations on the data handling and reporting to encourage an open discussion (Appendix 1.3 Interview guide). Different set of questions were developed for each audience, however, the overall objectives of the interviews and focus group discussion remained the same:

- to gather qualitative insights on the effectiveness, challenges, and opportunities that can inform future directions of IPBES processes, structures, and deliverables.

All sessions were recorded and transcribed using sonix.ai. A paired facilitation model ensured consistency and allowed space for reflective dialogue. Interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes, and focus groups were scheduled for 90 minutes. The focus group discussion were prioritised in cases interaction between different but similar groups was relevant (e.g the dynamic between the TSU and TFs, or authors from different assessments)

Thematic analysis

Transcripts from the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were analysed using a hybrid thematic coding approach. An initial thematic framework was developed by the review panel, drawing from the Terms of Reference and interview guides, and updated with inductive insights from the data. These transcripts were initially coded and provisionally grouped using ChatGPT 5o. The initial coding included all statements provided by the

respondents and provisional thematic grouping served as a basis for the thematic analysis performed by the panel members. The different prompts were tested and the most accurate were used in the AI initial coding and grouping (Appendix 1.4 AI prompts). The generated results were tested against panel member notes and refined. The results formed the basis of the findings and were then triangulated with the findings from the literature review, observation notes and answers to open-ended online survey questions.

Online survey

An online survey was conducted to capture broader input from the broader IPBES community. The survey was developed by the review panel, revised with support from the secretariat, and subjected from May 9th to June 2nd 2025 to an external review by a wide audience.⁹¹ In total 89 comments were received from Belgium, Czechia, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Senegal and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as well as from six individual stakeholders. The survey was finalized, taking the comments received into account, and issued on 18 June 2025 with a deadline of 16 July 2025.⁹²

The survey included both closed (5-point Likert scale) questions complemented by additional open ended questions at the end of each section (for the full survey see Appendix 1.5 Survey to support the midterm external review of the effectiveness of IPBES). The survey was structured into nine thematic sections:

1. Plenary and preparatory processes
2. Assessment procedures
3. Coherence and coordination
4. Work programme and budget
5. Working arrangements and structures
6. Policy alignment and impact
7. Communication and outreach
8. Operating principles
9. Horizon scanning

In total 249 participants completed the survey which then were corrected by typical biases forming 195 valid responses (see chapters below). Respondents were asked to self-identify their roles (e.g. IPBES member, author, Indigenous knowledge holder), and optional demographic data on region, gender, and age was collected to support inclusivity tracking with the results presented in the figures below (Figure 5).

⁹¹ In notification EM/2025/19

⁹² In notification EM/2025/32

About the respondents

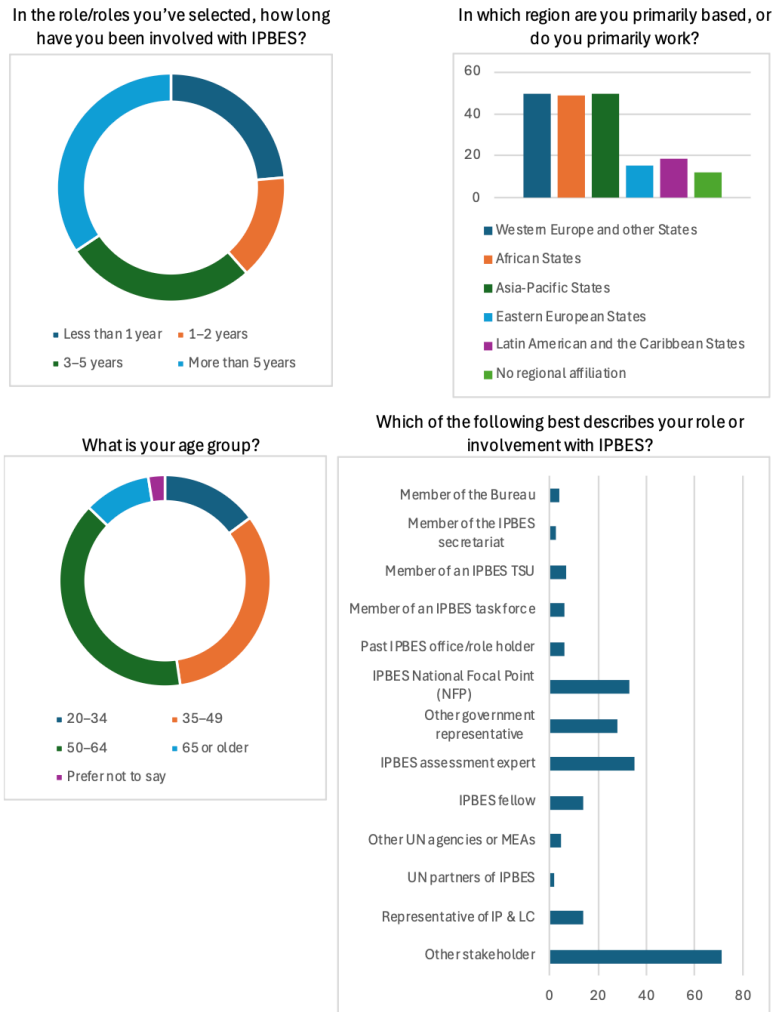


Figure 5 General statistics about respondents taking part in the online survey

Survey data were anonymised and analysed using descriptive statistics (for closed questions) and thematic analysis (for open responses). The results are presented in Annex 2 Online survey results.

Survey bias correction

To ensure robustness of the results, responses were screened for common data quality issues and response style biases (Baumgartner & Steenkamp, 2001; Leiner, 2019; Zhang et al., 2014). Six criteria were applied: (i) speeders, (ii) extreme responding, (iii) central tendency, (iv) straight-lining (IRP), (v) straight-lining (longstring), and (vi) low variance (Table 2). Additionally, to detect careless responding, we also screened the role checklist item in the survey (section: about you) and flagged each respondent with four or more roles (often mutually contradictory) as unrealistic.

Each criterion on its own was treated as a soft flag. Respondents triggering two or more soft flags were reclassified as hard flags. Hard-flagged cases were excluded from the main analysis but retained for sensitivity checks, while soft-flagged cases were retained in the main dataset and tested in sensitivity analyses.

Table 2 Data quality screening criteria and thresholds (5-point scale, 156 items). Note: numbers from 1 to 5 indicate responses on the scale from Strongly Agree (1) to Strongly Disagree (5)

Bias type	Definition	Threshold	Flag type	Number of respondents flagged
Speeders	Completion time far below median	< ¼ of median time (< 8:59; median = 35:56)	Soft	19
Extreme responders	% of answers in endpoints (1 or 5)	≥ 80%	Soft	22
Central responders	% of answers at midpoint (3)	≥ 80%	Soft	3
Straight-liners (IRP)	Largest proportion on a single option	≥ 80% identical answers	Soft	56
Straight-liners (longstring)	Longest consecutive identical run	≥ 47 (30% of 156 items)	Soft	58
Low variance (SD)	Within-person SD across items (valid 1-5 only)	< 0.30	Soft	26
Implausible role selection	Checklist item: excessive roles ticked	≥ 4 roles selected	Soft	3

Applying these thresholds, 54 responses (22%) were flagged, leaving 195 valid cases out of 249 total responses (78%) for the main analyses. The low effort of invalid response rate of around 20% is often reported in online surveys (Leiner, 2019). To confirm that exclusion of hard-flagged cases did not materially alter the findings a sensitivity analysis was performed.

Sensitivity analysis

To assess the robustness of results, analyses were repeated on three datasets: the full sample (N=249), the main sample excluding hard-flagged responses (N=195), and the strict sample containing only unflagged cases (N=162). Results were highly consistent across samples (Table 3). The average mean score ranged from 2.02 (Full) to 2.13 (Strict), a difference of only 0.11. Agreement levels varied between 60.1–64.8%, while neutrality (10.7–13.1%) and disagreement (6.2–8.5%) remained stable. These minor differences indicate that data cleaning and bias screening did not materially alter the substantive findings.

Table 3 Sensitivity analysis results across datasets. Note: numbers from 1 to 5 indicate responses on the scale from Strongly Agree (1) to Strongly Disagree (5)

Measure	Full (N=249)	Main (N=195)	Strict (N=162)	Δ Full→Main	Δ Main→Strict
Mean score (average)	2.02	2.12	2.13	-0.10	-0.01
% Agree/Strongly agree (1–2)	64.8%	60.1%	61.1%	+4.7%	-1.0%
% Neutral (3)	10.7%	11.9%	13.1%	-1.2%	-1.2%
% Disagree/Strongly disagree (4–5)	6.2%	7.6%	8.5%	-1.4%	-0.9%

Participatory observation

In addition to direct engagements, panel members also observed relevant IPBES meetings during the review period, including the 23rd (online) and 24th (in-person) joint Bureau and MEP Meeting (with Observers) held from 9th to 14th April and 9th to 11th July respectively; the

Webinar for newly designated IPBES NFPs and other interested government representatives held June 3rd and co-organized by the secretariat and the capacity-building TF and the Online quarterly stakeholder meeting held on 4 June and co-organized by the secretariat and the TSU on scenarios and models. Notes from these observations informed contextual understanding and triangulated other findings.

Ethical Considerations

All interviews and discussions were conducted in accordance with a shared ethics protocol. Participants received a detailed Participant consent form (Appendix 1.6 Participant Consent Form), outlining the voluntary nature of participation, the right to withdraw at any time, and assurances of confidentiality and anonymity. Transcripts and recordings were stored securely, and no identifying information is disclosed in the final report without explicit consent.

The review panel committed to creating inclusive, respectful spaces for engagement, with particular attention to supporting equitable participation from underrepresented regions, such as Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities.

Limitations

A number of constraints and limitations are noted with regard to the work of the external panel:

- Resource constraints: The report was developed by the external review panel members on a voluntary basis and within a short timeframe (April to October 2025) which limited the extent of observation, data collection and the depth of analysis.
- Data collection: The online survey received a good number of responses overall (195 determined as valid out of 249 submitted); however, some key groups were not well-represented, such as Pacific Island nations. Similarly, the participation in interviews and focus group discussions, although substantial, varied across regions and roles. Inevitably the review may not have captured the full diversity of experiences across all groups and regions.
- Logistical and technical challenges: The Panel was selected to ensure regional balance. While this enriched the report with diverse perspectives, it also introduced logistical challenges. Significant time zone differences made scheduling meetings, full engagement, and inclusive discussions among all panel members difficult. Furthermore, some panel members faced technical hurdles, including limited internet connectivity and difficulties accessing certain IT platforms.
- Language issues: Most of the exchanges as well as the preparation of the report were conducted in English. This may have limited the engagement of some of the panel members in the preparation process, and burdened both the members who are fluent in English and those for whom contributions in English were more difficult. Language as a barrier to inputs to the review was also perceived in discussions with NFPs and stakeholders.

These limitations are noted to provide full transparency and context for the report's findings. They should be taken into account when interpreting the recommendations and may offer

points to be considered for future reviews. Nevertheless, the external review panel takes full responsibility for the findings and recommendations presented in this report.

Literature

- Baumgartner, H., & Steenkamp, J. B. E. M. (2001). Response Styles in Marketing Research: A Cross-National Investigation. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 38(2), 143–156.
- Leiner, D. J. (2019). Too Fast, too Straight, too Weird: Non-Reactive Indicators for Meaningless Data in Internet Surveys. *Survey Research Methods*, 13(3), 229–248.
- Newing, H., Eagle, C. M., Puri, R. K., & Watson, C. W. (2010). *Conducting Research in Conservation: Social Science Methods and Practice* (1st Edition). Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
- Zhang, C., Arbor, A., & Conrad, F. G. (2014). Speeding in Web Surveys: The tendency to answer very fast and its association with straightlining. *Survey Research Methods*, 8(2), 127–135.

Appendix 1.1 Members of the review panel conducting the external part of the midterm review under the rolling work programme up to 2030 of IPBES

Name	Nationality	Affiliation
Ntakadzeni Tshidada, co-chair	South Africa	South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI)
Andrew Stott, co-chair	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Independent
Mariam Akhtar-Schuster	Germany	German IPBES Coordination Office
Milena Benavides Serrato	Colombia	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development
Wisdom Dlamini	Eswatini	University of Eswatini
Miguel Equihua-Zamora	Mexico	Instituto de Ecología, AC
Abigail Lynch	United States of America	U.S. Geological Survey, National Climate Adaptation Science Center
Rabindra Maharjan	Nepal	Forest Research and Training Centre
Jan Plesnik	Czechia	Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic
Serigne Modou Sarr	Senegal	Université Alioune Diop de Bambey
Wataru Suzuki	Japan	Ministry of the Environment of Japan
Anna Tiraa	Cook Islands	Ministry of Finance and Economic Management

Appendix 1.2 Document and literature review

Reviewed documents are organized by topic, and each topic may include several types of material, such as IPBES decisions and preparatory documents, scientific literature, and grey literature including reports, reviews and decisions from other organizations. IPBES decisions and preparatory documents are ordered chronologically, while other documents are listed alphabetically.

First external review and Implementation of the Rolling work programme

Decision IPBES-5/2: Review of the Platform

Decision IPBES-7/1: Rolling work programme of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services up to 2030 including:
Annex II: Terms of reference for task forces for the rolling work programme up to 2030

IPBES/7/5: Review of the effectiveness of the administrative and scientific functions of the Platform

IPBES/7/INF/18: Report on the review of the Platform at the end of its first work programme with Review of the first work programme of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) 01 February 2019

IPBES/8/INF/21: Overview of responses by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, the Bureau and the Executive Secretary to the recommendations set out in the report on the review of the Platform at the end of its first work programme

IPBES/9/11: Improving the effectiveness of the Platform

IPBES/9/INF/19: Overview of responses by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, the Bureau and the Executive Secretary to the recommendations set out in the report on the review of the Platform at the end of its first work programme

IPBES/9/INF/21: Lessons learned from online meetings and other online working practices

IPBES/10/INF/16: Overview of responses by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, the Bureau and the Executive Secretary to the recommendations set out in the report on the review of the Platform at the end of its first work programme

IPBES/11/INF/21: Overview of responses by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, the Bureau and the Executive Secretary to the recommendations set out in the report on the review of the Platform at the end of its first work programme

IPBES/11/INF/22: Midterm review of the Platform under the rolling work programme up to 2030: report of the internal part of the review

IPBES Rules and procedures

IPBES (2012): Functions, operating principles and institutional arrangements of IPBES. Panama City 16-21 April 2012.

Code of conduct for IPBES experts

IPBES/1/12: Report of the first session of the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services including:
Annex I Decision IPBES/1/1 Rules of procedure for the Plenary of the Platform;
Annex II Draft policy and procedures for the admission of observers;
Annex III Decision IPBES/1/2 Next steps for the development of the initial IPBES work programme;
Annex IV Decision IPBES/1/3 Procedure for receiving and prioritizing requests put to the Platform;
Annex V Decision IPBES/1/4 IPBES administrative and institutional arrangements;
Annex VI Decision IPBES/1/5 Status of contributions and initial budget for the Platform for 2013

Decision IPBES-2/1: Amendments to the rules of procedure for the Plenary with regard to rules governing the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel

Decision IPBES-2/2: Multidisciplinary Expert Panel

Decision IPBES-2/3: Procedures for the preparation of the Platform's deliverables

IPBES/8/INF/22: Implementation of the roles of the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel in practice including:
I. Modalities and practice guidance for the implementation of the different roles of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and Bureau in the preparation of IPBES deliverables;
II. Code of practice for members of Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and Bureau

Decision IPBES-3/3: Procedures for the preparation of Platform deliverables

Decision IPBES-4/3: Procedures for the preparation of Platform deliverables

Decision IPBES-5/3: Development of a second work programme of the Platform

IPBES Engagement with other entities

Diamond, S., Donatti, C., Duarte, C., Eisenhauer, N., Foden, W., Gasalla, M. A., Handa, C., Hickler, T., Hoegh-Guldberg, O., Ichii, K., Jacob, U., Insarov, G., Kiessling, W., Leadley, P., Leemans, R., Levin, L., Lim, M., Maharaj, S., Managi, S., Marquet, P. A., McElwee, P., Midgley, G., Oberdorff, T., Obura, D., Osman, E., Pandit, R., Pascual, U., Pires, A. P. F., Popp, A., Reyes- García, V., Sankaran, M., Settele, J., Shin, Y. J., Sintayehu, D. W., Smith, P., Steiner, N., Strassburg, B., Sukumar, R., Trisos, C., Val, A.L., Wu, J., Aldrian, E., Parmesan, C., Pichs-Madruga, R., Roberts, D.C., Rogers, A.D., Díaz, S., Fischer, M.,

Hashimoto, S., Lavorel, S., Wu, N., Ngo, H.T. 2021. IPBES-IPCC co-sponsored workshop report on biodiversity and climate change; IPBES and IPCC.

Akhtar-Schuster, M., Stringer, L. C., Metternicht, G., Barger, N. N., Chotte, J. L., & Kust, G. (2022). Assessing the Impact of Science in the Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. *Land*, 11(4).

McElwee, P. (2025). A tale of two panels: learning and coordinating across IPCC, IPBES, and other science-policy interfaces. *Climatic Change*, 178(3).

CBD/COP/DEC/XII/25: Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

CBD/COP/DEC/XV/8: Capacity-building and development and technical and scientific cooperation

CBD Regional and/or Subregional Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centres: Background Information

CITES Conf. 18.4: Cooperation with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

IPCC-LXI/Doc. 9: Report of the ad-hoc group on lessons learned from the sixth assessment cycle

UNCCD/Decision 21/COP.13: Work programme of the Science-Policy Interface for the biennium 2018–2019

UNCCD SPI Work programmes 2014-2015, 2016-2017, 2018-2019, 2020-2021, 2022-2024 and 2025-2026

Decision IPBES-2/8: Collaborative partnership arrangement to establish an institutional link between the Plenary and the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Development Programme including

Decision IPBES-4/4: Communication, stakeholder engagement and strategic partnerships

IPBES/9/9: Engagement with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

IPBES/9/INF/18: Information on strengthened engagement of stakeholders including:

- I. Stakeholder engagement;
- II. Engagement with United Nations partners;
- III. Collaboration with multilateral environmental agreements;
- IV. Engagement with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change;

- V. Collaboration with strategic partners;
- VI. IPBES collaborative supporters

IPBES/10/7: Engagement with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

IPBES/10/INF/15: Information on strengthened engagement of stakeholders including:

- I. Stakeholder engagement;
- II. Engagement with United Nations partners;
- III. Collaboration with multilateral environmental agreements;
- IV. Engagement with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change;
- V. Collaboration with strategic partners; VI. IPBES collaborative supporters

IPBES/11/INF/4: Information on the institutional arrangements established for the provision of technical support for the implementation of the work programme

IPBES/11/INF/20: Information on strengthened engagement of stakeholders

IPBES/MEP-Bureau/24/10: Communicating and engaging: Stakeholder engagement

IPBES nomination and selection process

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IPBES Objectives 2, 3, and 4

Decision IPBES-5/1: Implementation of the first work programme of the Platform including:
Annex I: IPBES rolling plan for capacity-building;
Annex II: Approach to recognizing and working with indigenous and local knowledge in the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services;
Annex III: Outline workplan for 2017 and 2018;
Annex IV: Scoping report for a thematic assessment on the sustainable use of wild species: deliverable 3 (b) (iii)

Decision IPBES-10/1: Implementation of the rolling work programme of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services up to 2030 including:
Annex I: Scoping report for a methodological assessment on monitoring biodiversity and nature's contributions to people;
Annex II: Scoping report for a methodological assessment of integrated biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning and ecological connectivity;
Annex III: Workplan for objective 2: building capacity, for the intersessional period 2023–2024;
Annex IV: Workplan for objective 3 (a): advanced work on knowledge and data – data and knowledge management, for the intersessional period 2023–2024;
Annex V: Workplan for objective 3 (a): advanced work on knowledge and data – knowledge generation catalysis, for the intersessional period 2023–2024;
Annex VI: Workplan for objective 3 (b): enhanced recognition of and work with Indigenous and local knowledge systems, for the intersessional period 2023–2024;
Annex VII: Workplan for objective 4 (a): advanced work on policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies, for the intersessional period 2023–2024;
Annex VIII: Workplan for objective 4 (b): advanced work on scenarios and models, for the intersessional period 2023–2024;
Annex IX: Terms of reference for the midterm review of the rolling work programme

of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services up to 2030;

Annex X: Terms of reference for the task force on capacity-building;

Annex XI: Terms of reference for the task force on data and knowledge management;

Annex XII: Terms of reference for the task force on Indigenous and local knowledge;

Annex XIII: Terms of reference for the task force on scenarios and models of biodiversity and ecosystem services

IPBES/8/INF/10: Information on enhanced recognition of and work with indigenous and local knowledge systems

IPBES/9/INF/13: Information on enhanced recognition of and work with indigenous and local knowledge systems

IPBES/10/INF/10: Information on enhanced recognition of and work with indigenous and local knowledge systems

Decision IPBES-11/1: Implementation of the rolling work programme of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services up to 2030 including:

Annex I: Scoping report for a second global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services;

Annex II: Workplan for objective 2: building capacity, for the intersessional period 2024–2026;

Annex III: Workplan for objective 3 (a): advanced work on knowledge and data – data and knowledge management for the intersessional period 2024–2026;

Annex IV: Workplan for objective 3 (a): advanced work on knowledge and data – knowledge generation catalysis, for the intersessional period 2024–2026;

Annex V: Workplan for objective 3 (b): enhanced recognition of and work with Indigenous and local knowledge systems, for the intersessional period 2024–2026;

Annex VI: Workplan for objective 4 (a): advanced work on policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies, for the intersessional period 2024–2026;

Annex VII: Workplan for objective 4 (b): advanced work on scenarios and models of biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, for the intersessional period 2024–2026;

Annex VIII: Indicators for measuring the effectiveness of the implementation of the workplans for objectives 2, 3 and 4 of the IPBES rolling work programme up to 2030

IPBES/11/INF/17: Information on advanced work on policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies

Objective 5 - Communicating and Engaging

Krug, C. B., Sterling, E., Cadman, T., Geschke, J., Drummond de Castro, P. F., Schliep, R., Osemwegie, I., Muller-Karger, F. E., & Maraseni, T. (2020). Stakeholder participation in IPBES: connecting local environmental work with global decision making. *Ecosystems and People*, 16(1), 197–211.

Decision IPBES-3/4: Communications, stakeholder engagement and strategic partnership including:

Annex I Communications and outreach strategy;

Annex II Stakeholder engagement strategy;

Annex III Guidance on the development of strategic partnerships and other collaborative arrangements

IPBES/8/INF/15 Information on strengthened communication including:

Annex on Implementation of the communications and outreach strategy

IPBES/8/INF/16 Information on strengthened engagement of stakeholders: implementation of the stakeholder engagement strategy including:

Results of the 2020 IPBES stakeholder survey

IPBES/9/INF/17 Information on strengthened communication including:

Annex on Implementation of the communications and outreach strategy

IPBES/10/INF/14 Information on strengthened communication including:

Annex on Information on strengthened communication

Financial and budgetary arrangements

OIOS Report 2025/016: Audit of the United Nations Environment Programme secretariat of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. 26 June 2025. Assignment No. AA2025-220-02

Decisions IPBES-2/7 and IPBES-3/2: Financial procedures for the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

Decision IPBES-5/6 Financial and budgetary arrangements including:

Annex I with:

(I.) Status of cash and in-kind contributions to the Platform;

(II.) Expenditures for 2015;

(III.) Estimated expenditures for 2016;

(IV.) Budget for the biennium 2017-2018;

(V.) Provisional budget for 2025;

Annex II: Draft fundraising strategy

Decision IPBES-7/4: Financial and budgetary arrangements for the Platform including:

(I.) Status of cash and in-kind contributions to the Platform;

(II.) Final expenditures for 2017;

(III.) Estimated expenditures for 2018;

(IV.) Budget for the biennium 2019–2020;

(V.) Provisional budget for 2021

Decision IPBES-8/4: Financial and budgetary arrangements including:

(I.) Status of cash and in-kind contributions to the Platform;

(II.) Final expenditures for 2018;

(III.) Final expenditures for 2018;

- (IV.) Final expenditures for 2020;
- (V.) Proposed budgets for 2021 to 2023

IPBES/8/5: Financial and budgetary arrangements for the Platform including:

- (I.) Status of cash and in-kind contributions to the Platform;
- (II.) Expenditures for 2018 to 2020;
- (III.) Provisional budget for 2021 to 2023;
- (IV.) Overview of the cost of the Platform and estimate of funds to be raised;
- (V.) Fundraising strategy with (A) Progress in implementing the fundraising strategy and (B) Draft guidelines that regulate contributions to the work of the Platform from the private sector and non-governmental stakeholders

Decision IPBES-9/3: Financial and budgetary arrangements including:

- (I.) Status of cash and in-kind contributions to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services;
- (II.) Final expenditures for 2021;
- (III.) Revised budget for 2022;
- (IV.) Budget for 2023;
- (V.) Provisional budget for 2024

IPBES/9/5: Financial and budgetary arrangements for the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services including:

- (I.) Status of cash and in-kind contributions to the Platform;
- (II.) Final expenditures for 2021;
- (III.) Proposed budget for 2022 to 2024 with Organization chart for the IPBES secretariat;
- (IV.) Overview of the cost of the Platform and estimate of funds to be raised;
- (V.) Fundraising strategy (A) Progress in implementing the fundraising strategy and (B) Report on acknowledgement of donors

Decision IPBES-10/3: Financial and budgetary arrangements for the Platform including:

- (I.) Status of cash and in-kind contributions to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services;
- (II.) Final expenditures for 2022;
- (III.) Revised budget for 2023;
- (IV.) Budget for 2024;
- (V.) Provisional budget for 2025

IPBES/10/5 Financial and budgetary arrangements for the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services including:

- (I.) Status of cash and in-kind contributions to the Platform;
- (II.) Final expenditures for 2022;
- (III.) Proposed budget for 2023 to 2025;
- (IV.) Overview of the cost of the Platform and estimate of funds to be raised;
- (V.) Fundraising strategy with Organization chart for the IPBES secretariat

Appendix 1.3 Interview guide

Introduction

Dear all,

This document is intended to support panel members in preparing for and conducting productive and coherent interviews and discussions with identified IPBES-relevant audiences as part of the IPBES external review process.

It is strongly recommended that each interview is conducted by at least two members of the external review panel. It is suggested that:

- One person leads the interview or the discussion, asks questions, and guides the flow of the conversation;
- The second is principally responsible for note-taking, monitoring time, and providing any additional support.

These guidelines apply to both individual interviews (45 minutes) and focus group discussions (90 minutes).

Purpose and approach

As part of the ongoing review of IPBES, we are conducting a series of semi-structured interviews (45 minutes) and facilitated focus group discussions (90 minutes). These conversations aim to gather and assess qualitative insights on the effectiveness, challenges, and opportunities that can inform future directions of IPBES processes, structures, and deliverables.

Each session will follow a semi-structured format, with a core set of guiding questions that have been identified by the members of the external review panel. These have been tailored to each audience group, while allowing space for elaboration, emerging themes, and participant-driven discussion. The tone of the interviews and the discussions will be open, constructive, and reflective, not judgemental or adversarial.

Ethical and Procedural Considerations

Each interview or discussion session will begin with the following verbal consent statement (or a written version, if appropriate; see Appendix 1.6 Participant Consent Form):

“Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview/discussion as part of the external review of IPBES. We want to emphasize that your participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to decline to answer any question or to stop the interview at any time without any consequence.

With your permission, this session will be audio-recorded to ensure the accuracy of our notes. The recording and all transcripts will be handled confidentially and stored securely. Your responses will be anonymized in all outputs — no statements will be attributed to individuals without explicit consent. Do you have any objections for the meeting to be recorded and to participate under these terms?”

and then wait for objections (if any) before proceeding.

Session Structure and Timing

Individual Interviews (45 minutes)

- Introduction & consent (5 min)
- Core interview questions (30–35 min)
- Open reflection and additional points (5–10 min)

Focus Group Discussions (90 minutes)

- Welcome, consent & introductions (10 min)
- Thematic discussion guided by 4–6 main questions (70 min)
 - Allow for interaction between the participants and follow-up questions.
- Synthesis and final reflections (5–10 min)

Facilitation Tips

- Create a safe, trustworthy and inclusive space for participation.
- Ensure balanced participation, especially in group settings — encourage quieter voices without putting anyone on the spot.
- Use neutral, non-leading language when asking questions or prompting elaboration.
- Allow silences — some participants may need a moment to reflect.
- Respect time, and gently steer the discussion back on topic if needed.
- If sensitive issues arise, acknowledge them respectfully and remind participants they can decline to answer.

Data handling and reporting

- Please take notes of key points during the session, it will ease the transcripts review.
- All responses will be aggregated thematically in the review report.
- Individual contributions will not be attributed unless explicit permission has been given.
- Any quotes used will be fully anonymized, however acknowledged as outcomes of interviews or discussions.

Closing the session

At the end of the session, thank the participant(s) and briefly outline the next steps:

“On behalf of the External Review Panel I'd like to Thank you very much for your time and insights. Your input is extremely valuable for understanding how IPBES can improve and evolve. The findings from these discussions will inform the external review report, which will be presented to the IPBES Plenary. All data will be treated confidentially, and no individual contributions will be identifiable.”

Questions

Bureau members

1. How would you describe the current relationship and division of roles between the Bureau and the MEP?
2. How are responsibilities within the Bureau distributed?
3. Do you feel that Bureau members are well equipped to carry out their duties?
4. Do you think the composition of the Bureau reflects a good balance of regions, gender, and expertise?
5. There have been discussions around the balance of the IPBES rolling work programme in addressing the four objectives of the platform
6. Are budget and finance issues well-handled in Plenary meetings and managed effectively by the Secretariat?
7. What role does the Bureau have in supporting MEP, expert groups and secretariat in creating a productive, rewarding and mutually respectful working environment among all experts and elements of the platform?

(Optional closing)

8. Regarding the [external] review procedure within IPBES:
9. Is there anything else you'd like to raise that hasn't come up yet?

MEP members

1. What do you see as the core role of MEP members within IPBES?
2. What supports active participation of MEP members [at IPBES meetings] — and what limits it?
3. How do the MEP and Bureau work together?
4. How balanced is expert representation in the MEP - with regard to gender, regions and expertise?
5. How would you assess the collaboration between the MEP, author teams, and different TFs and TSUs
6. What roles do the MEP and Bureau have in supporting expert groups and secretariat in creating a productive, rewarding and mutually respectful working environment among all experts [and elements] of the platform?
7. How effective do you think IPBES is at influencing policy, decision-making and knowledge generation at global, regional and national levels?
8. What is your opinion on the processes related to the development of fast-track assessments? Are they effective in responding to urgent policy needs?

(Optional closing)

9. Is there anything you would like to bring up that we haven't touched on?

Secretariat

1. Can you describe your role and responsibilities within the IPBES Secretariat, and how it supports the implementation of the rolling work programme up to 2030?
2. What have been the most persistent operational or administrative challenges encountered by the Secretariat in delivering the current work programme (e.g. staffing, coordination, document timelines)?
3. How effectively are available financial and human resources matched to the volume and complexity of the work programme?
4. How would you assess the quality and timeliness of interaction between the Secretariat and the Bureau or MEP?
5. What lessons have been learned from organizing recent Plenary sessions and supporting external review processes like this one?
6. Looking ahead, what strategic improvements or institutional innovations would you recommend to enhance the operational effectiveness and resilience of the IPBES Secretariat?

1. Can you describe your role and responsibilities within the IPBES Secretariat?
2. What are the most frequent operational or procedural challenges faced during the preparation and delivery of assessments (e.g. timelines, author coordination, review phases)?
3. How effective are current Secretariat mechanisms in supporting assessment authors (e.g. onboarding, guidance, facilitation during reviews)?
4. From your perspective, what role does the Secretariat play in facilitating the policy uptake of IPBES assessments after they are approved?
5. How does the Secretariat coordinate with the communications team, authors, and national focal points to enhance visibility and use of assessment findings?
6. From your perspective, what are the key opportunities for strengthening the Secretariat's role in supporting assessments under the current or future work programme?

1. How would you describe the core objectives and current priorities of the communications and stakeholder engagement function within IPBES?
2. To what extent do you think IPBES products—such as assessments and policy summaries—are effectively reaching and being used by their target audiences (e.g., governments, media, stakeholders)?
3. What mechanisms are currently in place to ensure diverse stakeholder engagement—especially from underrepresented regions, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, or younger generations?
4. How would you assess the relationship and coordination between the Secretariat and stakeholder platforms like ONet and IIFBES?
5. What are the main obstacles to increasing visibility and use of IPBES outputs, particularly in developing countries or among non-English-speaking audiences?
6. Looking forward, what do you see as the most promising opportunities to enhance IPBES's communication impact and stakeholder participation?

1. How would you describe your strategic approach to fundraising for IPBES? What are your main responsibilities as Head of Development?

2. What are the key trends you've observed in the willingness of governments, institutions, or private sector actors to contribute to IPBES?
 3. What do you see as the main barriers to achieving more predictable and diversified funding for IPBES?
 4. What strategies or mechanisms have proven most effective in generating financial or in-kind contributions to date?
 5. What efforts have been made to engage governments that have not contributed financially to IPBES, or to build new donor relationships (e.g., philanthropic, private sector, regional bodies)?
 6. Looking ahead, what opportunities do you see for strengthening IPBES's financial base and donor engagement?
-
1. From your position, how do you see the current strategic direction of IPBES under the rolling work programme to 2030? What key opportunities and risks do you anticipate for the Platform at this midpoint?
 2. What do you see as the major institutional strengths of IPBES today—and what aspects of its governance structure or internal coordination (e.g. Bureau, MEP, Secretariat, TSUs) require improvement?
 3. How would you describe the current relationship between IPBES and UNEP, particularly in UNEP's role as host agency?
 4. How effective is the current engagement between IPBES and the CBD, especially in supporting implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework?
 5. How do you see your role in helping to mobilize political support and sustainable funding for IPBES—from governments, the private sector, and philanthropy?
 6. At this critical midpoint in the rolling work programme, what do you believe is essential to secure IPBES's credibility, independence, and impact over the next five years?

Capacity-building (TF and TSU)

1. What are the primary goals of your capacity-building work within IPBES?
2. How do you support different participants (e.g. experts, facilitators, Bureau/MEP members, national focal points) to effectively engage in IPBES processes?
3. Are there regions or groups that remain underrepresented in capacity-building efforts?
4. To what extent does your capacity-building work support policy uptake of IPBES products?
5. How do you collaborate with other task forces, TSUs and UN partners (e.g. on ILK, data, knowledge generation)?
6. Looking ahead, what should be the key priorities for strengthening capacity across the IPBES community?

Data and knowledge management (TF and TSU)

1. How would you describe the main contributions of the Task Force and TSU on Data and Knowledge Management to the overall IPBES process?
2. How accessible and usable are IPBES data and knowledge products to different audiences (e.g. experts, policy actors, the public)?
3. How are you integrating new technologies (e.g. AI) into your work?
4. How does your team work to embed open science values and practices into IPBES processes?
5. What kind of support do authors and experts receive for data management and knowledge integration during assessments?
6. How do you address data gaps and inequalities in access, especially for countries or regions with lower data availability or infrastructure?
7. How do you collaborate with other Task Forces, TSUs and UN partners?
8. What should be the priorities for strengthening data and knowledge systems in future IPBES work?

Indigenous and local knowledge (TF and TSU)

1. How would you describe the key contributions of the ILK Task Force and TSU to the IPBES process?
2. How effectively is ILK currently integrated into IPBES processes?
3. How do you engage with Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) throughout your work?
4. What kinds of support do IPLC representatives and ILK holders need to engage fully in IPBES activities?
5. How well are your contributions taken into account by the MEP, Bureau, and other IPBES structures (TFs, TSUs, Authors, UN Partners)?
6. Looking ahead, what are the top priorities for strengthening ILK within IPBES?

Knowledge generation catalysis (MEP, Bureau and TSU)

1. How would you describe the current role of the MEP, Bureau and TSU in catalyzing knowledge generation for IPBES?
2. How effective has the catalytic function been beyond assessments?
3. What mechanisms exist to identify and fill knowledge gaps?
4. What are the main challenges you face in fulfilling your mandate?
5. How does the Task Force relate to other bodies within IPBES, such as the MEP, Bureau, and other TSUs?
6. What improvements would strengthen your ability to catalyze knowledge generation in the future?

Policy support (MEP, Bureau and TSU)

1. How do you understand the role of the MEP, Bureau and TSU in ensuring policy relevance and facilitating the policy uptake of IPBES products?

2. How effective do you think IPBES has been in achieving policy impact?
3. What are the main challenges you face in supporting policy engagement?
4. How do you assess or monitor the effectiveness of your policy support work?
5. How do you collaborate with other IPBES bodies (e.g., authors, other Task Forces) and other stakeholders, including UN partners, to ensure policy relevance and accessibility of outputs?
6. Looking ahead, what would help improve the policy support function of IPBES?

Scenarios and models (TF and TSU)

1. How would you describe the core mandate of the Task Force on Scenarios and Models?
2. How do you support the uptake and use of scenarios and models within IPBES assessments?
3. How is the Nature Futures Framework (NFF) being implemented in practice?
4. What efforts have been made to engage or build a broader community of practice around scenarios and models?
5. What challenges have you encountered in promoting the use of scenarios and models within the IPBES rolling work programme?
6. What operational or administrative constraints affect your work, and how could these be improved?

Co-chairs, CLAs, and other authors and fellows of completed assessments

1. Looking back at the full assessment process, what aspects worked well and what could be improved?
2. How helpful did you find the guidance provided in the scoping report?
3. How would you describe your collaboration with other parts of IPBES, such as the MEP, Bureau, Secretariat, Task Forces or TSUs?
4. How well did you understand the roles and responsibilities of authors, reviewers, and other contributors throughout the assessment process?
5. How would you describe your experience during the Plenary session where your assessment was considered?
6. What lessons do you think IPBES should take forward to improve future assessment processes and support for authors?

Co-chairs, CLAs, and other authors and fellows of on-going assessments

1. Can you describe your overall experience contributing to the fast-track assessment process?
2. What, if any, challenges did you encounter during the development of the fast-track assessment?

3. What forms of support—technical, institutional, or otherwise—would have helped you address those challenges more effectively?
4. From your perspective, what are the key benefits or opportunities of working in a fast-track modality?
5. Are there any design elements of the fast-track process you would recommend changing?
6. How would you assess the value and relevance of fast-track assessments within IPBES's overall work programme?

Stakeholders

1. Could you briefly describe your engagement with IPBES and ONet?
2. What are the key opportunities and challenges you and other stakeholders have in engaging with IPBES?
3. Do you feel that the perspectives of stakeholders like yourself are adequately heard and considered within IPBES?
4. How can ONet and its members better support the work and mandate of IPBES?
5. What kind of support would help stakeholders engage more meaningfully in IPBES processes?
6. What improvements would you suggest to strengthen stakeholder engagement in IPBES moving forward?

MEAs

1. How do you generally communicate and collaborate with IPBES?
2. What are the main benefits your MEA has gained from interacting with IPBES?
3. Are there any challenges you encounter in collaborating with IPBES?
4. In your view, how could the collaboration between IPBES and MEAs be improved?
5. At past MEP and Bureau meetings, information sharing with MEAs has taken place. In your opinion, how could this be strengthened or used more effectively?
6. Is there anything else you would like to add regarding your MEA's collaboration with IPBES?

Appendix 1.4 AI prompts

Notes:

- Pasting transcripts works better than uploading them.
- It works with up to 5k words at a time
- It works better when repeating the prompt each time
- When grouping it works fine with up to 30 initial codes at a time

Initial coding:

Initial coding prompt:

I will upload the transcript of a focus group discussion. I want you to code it using initial codes. Initial codes are detailed, descriptive phrases that summarise the explicit content of each sentence or utterance. They do not interpret or generalise; they only describe what is being said. Most answers will contain several such codes, and many codes will appear repeatedly across the transcript. Please code 20 minutes of transcript at the time to increase accuracy. Please output the results in CSV format, printed in the chat with four columns:

Initial Code – A short, descriptive label of what is being said.

Transcript Line – The exact sentence or utterance

Speaker name – Full name of the speaker

Timestamp – Time in the transcript when the sentence was said.

Format the output in a code block:

```
"Initial Code", "Transcript Line", "Speaker", "Timestamp"
```

```
"mention of introductions", "And I think that we should start with an introduction.", "Boris Božić", "07:56",
```

```
"reference to previous work relationships", "I see that you know each other already from previous work, which is great.", "Boris Božić", "07:56"
```

Instructions:

- Break the transcripts into distinct ideas.
- Assign at least one initial code per sentence; use commas within quotes if multiple codes apply.
- Ensure the output is valid CSV: wrap both fields in double quotes, separate with a comma, and avoid line breaks within cells.
- Do not include anything else—only the CSV-formatted lines.

Initial grouping:

Initial grouping prompt:

I will provide a full transcript and a list of initial codes (split into multiple parts). The codes follow the transcript in a way that each subsequent code comes after the previous in the transcript. Same with the parts; part 2 comes after part 1 in the transcript and so on.

Instructions:

1. Process one part at a time.
Use only the initial codes from the current part in that run.

2. Use every single code from the list once and only once.
 - Do not change, reword, merge, or omit any codes.
 - If a code cannot be matched confidently, assign it to the "Other" group, but it must still appear with a transcript line.
 - No blank or unmatched codes allowed.
3. Before returning the output, cross-check your response:
 - Count the number of initial codes from the list.
 - Count the number of codes in your output.
 - If the numbers don't match, return an error and ask me for clarification.
4. Assign codes to thematic groups based on content.
 - You may create as many thematic groups as needed.
 - Be as specific as possible. Break broad categories like "support," "timeline," or "management" into more precise subthemes (e.g., "visa-related scheduling issues," "unclear post-submission author roles," "conflicting task force guidance").
 - Use the same group names across parts and keep them conceptually consistent.
 - If a code clearly does not fit any existing group, place it in a group called "Other."
 - Use the provided transcript to guide the grouping logic, not assumptions about the labels.
5. Format output as valid CSV in a code block:
`"Group", "Initial Code", "Transcript Line"`
6. Do not include extra comments, explanations, or summaries in your reply. Only output the CSV lines.
7. The [number] files of initial codes contain exactly [number] codes. If fewer or more are detected in the output files, alert me. Rephrasing the initial codes and transcript lines is not allowed.

Appendix 1.5 Survey to support the midterm external review of the effectiveness of IPBES

The survey may take 30 minutes to complete. All responses will be anonymised in the final report. The section “about you” serves for statistical analysis of the respondents only. Most questions are multiple choice, allowing you to respond quickly and easily by selecting from a set of predefined answers (from “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree”). In some cases, you will be invited to provide additional information – this is entirely optional. The insights gathered through this survey will inform the ongoing review of IPBES, helping to assess its effectiveness and guide improvements to better serve the biodiversity science-policy interface.

This survey consists of 9 sections, each covering different aspects of the work of IPBES and aimed at various groups of respondents. You may find that some questions are not relevant to your role or experience. If that is the case, please feel free to select “Don’t know / Not able to answer” and move on.

At the start of each section, a note in parentheses indicates the intended primary audience for that section. You can use this as a guide to focus on the questions most relevant to your experience and expertise. The sections of the survey are as follows:

1. Effectiveness of Plenary sessions and preparatory processes
2. Effectiveness of the assessment procedures
3. Effectiveness of the actions for coherence
4. Effectiveness of the work programme and budget
5. Effectiveness of the working arrangements of the Platform
6. Policy alignment and impact
7. Communication and outreach
8. IPBES operating principles
9. Horizon scanning

Thank you for your time and valuable input.

On behalf of the external review panel,
Andy Stott and Ntakadzeni Tshidada
Co-Chairs, External Review Panel

SECTION: ABOUT YOU

Which of the following best describes your role or involvement with IPBES? (Please select the one or more that best apply.)

- IPBES national focal point (NFP)
- Other government representatives (including, e.g., members of a delegation to an IPBES Plenary session)
- Member of the Bureau
- Member of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP)
- Member of an IPBES task force
- Member of an IPBES technical support unit (TSU)
- Member of the IPBES secretariat
- IPBES assessment expert
- IPBES fellow
- Past IPBES office/role holder
- Representative of one of the 4 UN partners of IPBES (UNEP, UNDP, UNESCO, FAO)
- Representative of other UN agencies or secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements
- Representative of Indigenous Peoples and local communities
- Participant in a community of practice
- Other stakeholders... (specify)

In the role/roles you've selected, how long have you been involved with IPBES?

- Less than 1 year
- 1–2 years
- 3–5 years
- More than 5 years

In which region are you primarily based, or do you primarily work?

- African States
- Asia-Pacific States
- Eastern European States
- Latin American and Caribbean States
- Western European and other States
- No regional affiliation

(Optional) Please indicate your institutional affiliation or organization name:

[Short text response]

What is your age group? (Please select one option)

- 20–34
- 35–49
- 50–64
- 65 or older
- Prefer not to say

QUESTIONS FOR THE EXTERNAL REVIEW ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF IPBES

1. EFFECTIVENESS OF PLENARY SESSIONS AND PREPARATORY PROCESSES
(Please answer if you participated in at least one IPBES Plenary session or a preparatory process for a Plenary session)

Q 1.1. How effective do you believe the IPBES Plenary sessions are in achieving the objectives and addressing the priorities outlined in the IPBES rolling work programme up to 2030? Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

The structure and organization of work of Plenary sessions

1. The structure of Plenary sessions is adequate to address all items planned for discussion (e.g., consideration of assessment summaries for policymakers, work programme updates, procedural matters)
2. The current format of Plenary sessions (in-person with the opportunity for duly registered delegation members to view proceedings) enables effective and inclusive participation by IPBES members
3. The current modalities of Plenary sessions are sufficient to address emerging topics in a timely manner
4. The rules of procedure of the Plenary, including the rules for decision-making by consensus, are suitable for achieving the objectives of IPBES
5. The timing and frequency of Plenary sessions are adequate for achieving the objectives of IPBES

Expert contributions during IPBES Plenary sessions

6. IPBES Chair and other Bureau members are well prepared for their roles during Plenary sessions
7. The Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP) provides effective scientific support during discussions at Plenary sessions
8. Assessment co-chairs and other authors are well prepared for discussions at the Plenary sessions

Members and observers at IPBES Plenary sessions

9. As an IPBES Plenary participant (member or observer), I am generally satisfied with the effectiveness and scientific content of the discussions during Plenary sessions
10. As an IPBES member, I am sufficiently equipped to make informed decisions during the consideration of summaries for policymakers (SPM)
11. Plenary processes facilitate the views of a broad and balanced range of IPBES members being expressed and reflected in outcomes

IPBES Plenary sessions outcomes

12. The Plenary is effective in reaching consensus on the approval of summaries for policymakers (SPMs)
13. The scientific credibility of the SPMs is well maintained throughout the consideration by Plenary
14. The Plenary is effective in adopting updates to the rolling work programme

Q 1.2. Would you like to provide additional comments to support your assessment above? In particular, suggest potential improvements of the effectiveness of the Plenary sessions?

[Open text response field]

Q 1.3. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the preparatory processes to facilitate the discussions at IPBES Plenary sessions (final Government review of draft documents, informal preparatory meetings, consultations, Chair's notes, etc).

1. In general, informal pre-Plenary engagement activities—including informal preparatory online meetings, and Chair's informal notes—are effective in preparing both IPBES members and observers for the IPBES Plenary sessions
2. All relevant documents are made available in sufficient time to support the preparation of national positions.
3. The timeframe provided for final government review of the assessment chapters and summaries for policymakers (SPMs) is adequate
4. Chair's notes effectively support discussions at IPBES Plenary sessions
5. Informal preparatory online meetings effectively address issues relevant to observer states, and other observers, including UN organizations
6. Informal preparatory online meetings are effective in identifying potentially contested issues in advance of the Plenary session
7. Informal preparatory online meetings provide sufficient opportunities for IPBES members to express their views
8. Preparation for the consideration of deliverables and work plans under work programme objectives 2, 3 & 4* at IPBES Plenary sessions, e.g., review of documents and informal preparatory online meetings, supports effective consideration of work related to these objectives at Plenary sessions

* Objective 2: Building capacity, Objective 3: Strengthening the knowledge foundations, Objective 4: Supporting policy

Q 1.4. Would you like to provide additional comments to support your assessment above? In particular, suggest potential improvements of the effectiveness of the preparatory process?

[Open text response field]

2. EFFECTIVENESS OF ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

(Please answer if you participated in the nomination or selection of experts, or the scoping or production of one or more assessments and/or attended an IPBES workshop)

Q 2.1 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about the procedures used in IPBES assessments and workshops.

Expert diversity, nomination and selection process

1. The nomination and selection process for experts involved in IPBES assessments is transparent
2. The nomination and selection process for experts ensures appropriate regional balance
3. The nomination and selection process for experts ensures adequate inclusion of a diversity of expertise, including social science experts and practitioners
4. The nomination and selection process for experts adequately includes holders of Indigenous and local knowledge (ILK)
5. The timeframe provided for expert nominations is sufficient
6. Social science perspectives are adequately represented in IPBES assessments (e.g., economics, sociology, anthropology)
7. Contributions from practitioners are effectively integrated into IPBES assessments

The assessment scoping process

8. The scoping process for assessments is comprehensive and effective
9. Scoping reports for IPBES assessments effectively identify the policy needs of members and relevant stakeholders
10. Scoping reports provide a clear framework for experts to assess knowledge relevant to those policy needs

Assessment production (or writing) process

11. The procedures for the production of assessments, included in the procedures for the preparation of IPBES deliverables set out in IPBES 3/3, are both comprehensive and effective
12. During the writing of an assessment, sufficient moments of exchange and reflection are foreseen between and across the different chapters for assessment experts at all levels (i.e., co-chairs, coordinating lead authors, lead authors, review editors)
13. The review process of assessment drafts is effective

IPBES workshops

14. IPBES workshops and co-sponsored workshops fulfil their function of supporting Plenary-approved activities
15. The management of IPBES workshops is effective
16. IPBES workshops and their reports are a useful tool for addressing urgent needs expressed by IPBES members

Q 2.2 Would you like to provide additional comments to support your assessment above? In particular, suggest potential improvements?

[Open text response field]

Q 2.3. Are there any lessons from past assessments that could be reflected upon to improve the production process of future assessments?

[Open text response field]

3. EFFECTIVENESS OF ACTIONS FOR COHERENCE

(Please answer if you are familiar with the work of international organizations and the bodies of multilateral environmental agreements)

Q 3.1: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the complementarity and alignment of IPBES work with that of other science-policy entities, including MEAs or UN organizations (examples include: CBD, Ramsar Convention, CMS, UNEP, FAO, UNDP, IPCC)?

1. IPBES bodies effectively coordinate with other science-policy entities to avoid duplication of effort
2. IPBES assessments and outputs provide added value beyond what is already produced by other science-policy entities
3. IPBES clearly communicates how its work complements that of other science-policy entities
4. IPBES actively engages in documenting and building on synergies with other relevant science-policy processes
5. Joint planning or collaboration between IPBES and other entities contributes to more coherent global science-policy processes
6. IPBES participates effectively in relevant initiatives or dialogues between and across science-policy entities

7. The scheduling of major IPBES events (e.g., Plenary sessions, including the consideration of assessments) takes into consideration the timing of other relevant MEA meetings and processes
8. Current coordination with other science-policy entities is sufficient

Q 3.2 Would you like to provide additional comments to support your assessment above? In particular, suggest potential improvements?

[Open text response field]

4. EFFECTIVENESS OF THE WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET
(Please answer if you are closely involved in the work of IPBES, including IPBES Members, UN partners and experts; previous and current role holders)

Q 4.1 To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the long-term sustainability of IPBES?

1. The current IPBES budget enables the full implementation of Plenary-approved activities
2. The scope of the IPBES work programme corresponds appropriately to the availability of financial and budgetary resources
3. The IPBES budget supports equitable participation in IPBES processes across different UN regions, including from developing countries and Indigenous Peoples and local communities
4. The IPBES work programme up to 2030 is sufficiently flexible to respond to emerging or urgent policy-relevant requests
5. The IPBES work programme up to 2030 is sufficiently flexible to be able to adjust based on the availability of financial and human resources
6. The IPBES rolling work programme up to 2030 is well-aligned with the policy priorities of IPBES members
7. The current voluntary funding mechanism of IPBES is effective in delivering on IPBES priorities
8. Contributions by IPBES members to the IPBES Trust Fund should be increased and broadened to support the sustainability of the work programme
9. Contributions by private sector to the IPBES Trust Fund should be strengthened to support the sustainability of the work programme
10. The partnership arrangement with UNEP, UNESCO, FAO, and UNDP could be better utilized to identify opportunities for cost-sharing and mobilizing additional resources in support of the IPBES work programme

Q 4.2 Would you like to provide additional comments to support your assessment above? In particular, suggest potential improvements?

[Open text response field]

5. EFFECTIVENESS OF THE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS OF THE PLATFORM
(Please answer if you are involved in the work of IPBES, including IPBES Members, stakeholders and experts; previous and current role holders)

Q 5.1: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the effectiveness of the working arrangements of the Bureau, Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP), task forces, technical support units (TSUs),* and the secretariat in fulfilling their mandates and delivering the rolling work programme?

* Objective 2: Building capacity - TSU at the Norwegian Environment Agency, Trondheim. Objective 3a: Advanced work on data and knowledge - TSU at Senckenberg Society for Nature Research, Frankfurt, Germany for data management; TSU at the French Biodiversity Office/French Ministry for Ecological Transition and Territorial Cohesion on behalf of Biodiversa+ for knowledge generation catalysis. Objective 3b: Work with Indigenous and local knowledge systems - TSU at UNESCO. Objective 4a: Advanced work on policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies - TSU at UNEP-WCMC. Objective 4b: Activities on scenarios and models - TSU at IGES, Japan.

MEP and Bureau

1. The nomination and selection processes for members of the MEP and Bureau facilitate the election of members with the required expertise and experience
2. The Bureau carries out the administrative functions of IPBES in line with the mandate and procedures of the Bureau as set out in the founding resolution of IPBES and adopted by the Plenary
3. The MEP provides appropriate oversight of the scientific and technical functions of IPBES in line with the mandate and procedures of the MEP as set out in the founding resolution of IPBES and adopted by the Plenary
4. The Bureau has adequate capacity to provide direction for work programme objectives 3b knowledge generation and 4a policy support, which do not have their own dedicated task forces
5. The MEP has adequate capacity to provide expert guidance work programme objectives 3b knowledge generation and 4a policy support, which do not have their own dedicated task forces

Building capacity (Objective 2)

6. For work programme objective 2 on capacity-building, there are clear and well-understood deliverables and performance indicators to assess progress
7. The nomination and selection process for members of the task force provides appropriate expertise (including ILK) and regional and gender balance
8. The capacity-building task force and TSU have sufficient expertise and capacity to deliver their respective elements of the rolling work programme
9. The capacity-building task force and TSU and the secretariat work effectively and efficiently together to deliver on this objective

Capacity-building activities and resources

10. The IPBES manual for national focal points helps clarify the role and responsibilities of national focal points
11. The IPBES fellowship programme effectively builds the capacity of early-career individuals to contribute to IPBES work
12. The selection process for IPBES fellows is transparent
13. The selection process for IPBES fellows ensures appropriate regional balance
14. The IPBES training and familiarization programme is useful for understanding IPBES processes, deliverables and how to participate in the work of IPBES
15. IPBES youth workshops effectively engage and build the capacity of young people in biodiversity science and policy
16. Dialogues organized by the capacity-building task force and TSU for governments and stakeholders with IPBES experts enhance mutual understanding and support meaningful engagement
17. Webinars for newly designated IPBES national focal points and other interested government representatives are relevant for the understanding of the structure and functioning of IPBES
18. Capacity-building activities to support the uptake of IPBES assessments improve the use of IPBES findings in policy and practice
19. Communities of practice catalysed by IPBES provide useful platforms for ongoing exchange, learning and collaboration among stakeholders

20. The IPBES capacity-building forum effectively identifies capacity needs and strengthens partnerships to address them
21. IPBES activities encourage and support the development of national science-policy platforms and assessments related to biodiversity

Advanced work on knowledge and data (Objective 3a)

22. For work programme objective 3a, data and knowledge management aspect, there are clear and well-understood deliverables and performance indicators to assess progress
23. The nomination and selection process for experts provides appropriate expertise (including ILK) and regional and gender balance for the task force on data and knowledge management
24. The task force and TSU on data and knowledge management have sufficient expertise and capacity to deliver their respective elements of the rolling work programme
25. The task force and TSU on data and knowledge management and the secretariat work effectively and efficiently together to deliver on this objective
26. The task force on data and knowledge management with support from its TSU effectively ensures that full consideration is given to the impacts of new technologies (e.g., AI) on knowledge generation and management to the work of IPBES
27. The task force on data and knowledge management with support from its TSU effectively provides support to assessment authors on aspects relating to data and knowledge management
28. For work programme objective 3a, knowledge generation aspect, there are clear and well-understood deliverables and performance indicators to assess progress
29. The Bureau, MEP and TSU on knowledge generation catalysis have sufficient expertise and capacity to deliver on the respective elements of the rolling work programme.
30. MEP, Bureau, the TSU on knowledge generation catalysis and the secretariat work effectively and efficiently together to deliver on this objective

Work with Indigenous and local knowledge systems (Objective 3b)

31. For work programme objective 3b, there are clear and well-understood deliverables and performance indicators to assess progress
32. The nomination and selection process for experts provides appropriate expertise (including ILK) and regional and gender balance for the task force on Indigenous and local knowledge
33. The task force and TSU on ILK have sufficient expertise and capacity to deliver on the respective elements of the rolling work programme
34. The task force and TSU on ILK and the secretariat work effectively and efficiently together to deliver on this objective

Activities and resources

35. Dialogue workshops on methods and participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) effectively enhance engagement and collaboration in IPBES processes
36. The approach to recognizing and working with Indigenous and local knowledge (ILK) in IPBES is well-implemented and supports effective participation by IPLCs
37. The methodological guidance provided by IPBES to enhance the participation of IPLCs in assessments is effective and practical
38. IPBES learning and development opportunities to strengthen the capacity of IPLCs to engage with its work are effective and practical

Advanced work on policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies (Objective 4a)

39. For work programme objective 4a, there are clear and well-understood deliverables and performance indicators to assess progress
40. The Bureau, MEP and TSU on policy support have sufficient expertise and capacity to deliver on the respective elements of the rolling work programme
41. MEP, Bureau, the TSU on policy support and the secretariat work effectively and efficiently together to deliver on this objective

Activities and resources

42. The guidance provided to assessment authors, including the policy tools and methodologies typology, effectively supports the policy relevance and impact of IPBES assessments
43. Online dialogues effectively foster uptake of IPBES assessments by policymakers across different regions
44. IPBES fact sheets effectively communicate key findings from assessments to policymakers in a concise and accessible manner

Advance work on scenarios and models (Objective 4b)

45. For work programme objective 4b, there are clear and well-understood deliverables and performance indicators to assess progress
46. The nomination and selection process for experts provides appropriate expertise (including ILK) and regional and gender balance for the task force on scenarios and models
47. The task force and TSU for scenarios and models have sufficient expertise and capacity to deliver their respective elements of the rolling work programme
48. The task force and TSU for scenarios and models and the secretariat work effectively and efficiently together to deliver on this objective

Activities and resources

49. The task force and TSU for scenarios and models effectively provide support to authors during the development of IPBES assessments and promote coherence across the IPBES work programme
50. The task force and TSU for scenarios and models effectively promote dialogue between IPBES and the communities of practice focused on scenarios and models

Q 5.2 Would you like to provide additional comments to support your assessment above? In particular suggest potential improvements?

[Open text response field]

Q5.3 To what extent are non-governmental stakeholders effectively involved in the activities and decision-making processes of IPBES?

1. IPBES members have a good understanding of IPBES non-governmental stakeholders, including stakeholders who contribute to the work of IPBES and stakeholders who are potential users of IPBES products
2. As a non-governmental stakeholder, I have the opportunity to contribute to the formulation of the IPBES rolling work programme
3. As a non-governmental stakeholder, I participate in the review processes of IPBES assessments (objective 1)
4. As a non-governmental stakeholder, I have the opportunity to contribute to the implementation of the rolling work programme, including objectives 2, 3a, 3b, 4a

and 4b on building capacity, strengthening the knowledge foundations and supporting policy

5. As a non-governmental stakeholder, I am able to access and use IPBES products in a timely manner
6. As a non-governmental stakeholder, I am satisfied with the quality of IPBES products
7. As a non-governmental stakeholder, I am satisfied with the outreach activities that inform and support the uptake and use IPBES products
8. IPBES is effective at growing the wider community of IPBES contributors and users, to support the rolling work programme and uptake and use of IPBES products in diverse contexts
9. As a non-governmental stakeholder, I feel that my contributions have been appreciated or reflected, as appropriate

Q 5.4 Would you like to provide additional comments to support your assessment above? In particular suggest potential improvements?

[Open text response field]

6. POLICY ALIGNMENT AND IMPACT

(Please answer if you use or are involved in the production of IPBES products, including IPBES Members, UN organizations and other international entities, experts and the community of practice connected with IPBES)

Q 6.1 Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding the policy impact of IPBES and the mechanisms in place to support it

National-level relevance and impact

1. IPBES deliverables are relevant to address biodiversity-related policy needs at the national level
2. IPBES assessments have contributed to the development or revision of national policies, strategies or projects
3. National policymakers actively use IPBES deliverables to make informed decisions
4. IPBES helps shape national research agendas on biodiversity and nature's contributions to people
5. The SPMs address the priorities of concern to IPBES members

International relevance and impact

6. IPBES deliverables are relevant to regional and global policy frameworks
7. IPBES findings are used in the negotiations under and implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs)
8. UN entities, donors and other international actors use IPBES outputs to inform, revise and update their programmes and strategies
9. IPBES contributes to shaping the international biodiversity-related science-policy agenda

Knowledge use and policy uptake

10. Knowledge from completed IPBES assessments is a valuable resource for addressing emerging policy needs
11. Additional resources (financial, technical or human) are needed to extract, translate in different languages or apply the knowledge from completed IPBES assessments to current and future policy contexts

12. The IPBES rolling work programme under its objectives 2, 4 and 5* identifies relevant policy needs and supports opportunities for policy uptake of IPBES products
13. IPBES products inform actionable policy interventions at global, regional, national and local levels
14. Policy audiences have sufficient capacity, skills, knowledge and resources to access and use IPBES products effectively
15. The current length and format of the SPMs effectively communicate the key findings to policymakers

Policy impacts

16. Activities covered by existing resources, such as tracking available data from media coverage and self-reported entries in the TRACK database are sufficient to evaluate the policy impacts of IPBES
17. IPBES mandate should cover procedures and mechanisms to assess the impact of IPBES on national and international policies, partnerships and institutions

Alignment with policy needs

18. The strategic vision and mission of IPBES are clear, well-communicated and effectively guide the Platform's activities
19. The activities and outputs of IPBES effectively enhance and foster international environmental agendas, such as the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals
20. IPBES is effectively adapting to address new and emerging issues, such as zoonotic diseases, technological developments (e.g., artificial intelligence) and shifting policy needs

* Objective 2: Building capacity, Objective 4: Supporting policy, Objective 5: Communication and engaging

Q 6.2 Would you like to provide additional comments on policy alignment and impact?

[Open text response field]

7. COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

(Please answer if you use or are involved in the production of IPBES products, including IPBES Members, UN organizations and other international entities, experts and the community of practice connected with IPBES)

Q 7.1 To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the effectiveness of IPBES communication, outreach and information platforms in enhancing awareness, engagement and influencing policy outcomes?

IPBES products and outreach

1. IPBES products and/or activities (e.g., summaries for policymakers, fact sheets, social media posts) effectively communicate assessment findings to policy audiences
2. IPBES outreach activities (e.g., dialogue meetings, side events, media relations and other contributions to high-level conferences) are effective in reaching and engaging diverse policy audiences
3. There are sufficient tools or approaches available to help members effectively amplify the existing IPBES communications

IPBES website

4. The IPBES website is easy to navigate
5. The IPBES website is accessible to multiple audiences, across different devices and to users with disabilities
6. The IPBES website clearly communicates the objectives and work of IPBES
7. The IPBES website provides timely and relevant information about IPBES activities, deliverables and procedures
8. Information and resources such as documents on the website are useful and relevant to my work
9. The IPBES website effectively informs me about opportunities to engage with the Platform

Q 7.2 Would you like to provide additional comments to support your above assessment? Please identify specific products that you have found particularly useful.

[Open text response field]

8. IPBES OPERATING PRINCIPLES

[All participants are invited to respond]

Q 8.1 To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the IPBES operating principles?

1. IPBES collaborates effectively with existing biodiversity relevant frameworks, organizations and networks, including multilateral environmental agreements, UN bodies, and networks of scientists, to build on their work and avoid duplication
2. IPBES ensures scientific independence, credibility and legitimacy through peer review of its work and transparency in decision-making
3. IPBES uses clear, transparent and scientifically credible processes to exchange, share and use data, information and technologies, including non-peer-reviewed literature when appropriate
4. IPBES recognizes and respects the contribution of Indigenous and local knowledge to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use
5. IPBES provides policy-relevant information without offering policy-prescriptive advice
6. IPBES respects the mandates of multilateral environmental agreements
7. IPBES integrates capacity-building into all relevant aspects of its work, according to priorities
8. IPBES acknowledges the unique biodiversity and scientific knowledge of different regions and ensures the full participation of developing countries and balanced regional representation
9. IPBES takes an interdisciplinary approach, incorporating all relevant disciplines, including both social and natural sciences
10. IPBES ensures gender equity in all relevant aspects of its work
11. IPBES adequately addresses terrestrial, marine and inland water biodiversity and ecosystem services
12. IPBES ensures the full use of national, subregional and regional assessments and knowledge, including a bottom-up approach where appropriate

Q 8.2 Would you like to provide additional comments to support your above assessment, or add any other aspect?

[Open text response field]

9. HORIZON SCANNING

(Please answer if you are involved in the work of IPBES, including IPBES Members, stakeholders and experts, previous and current role holders)

Q 9.1 Would you like to provide additional comments on potential future threats that may impact IPBES' effectiveness, and how IPBES might anticipate and mitigate them?

[Open text response field]

Appendix 1.6 Participant Consent Form

Interviews and Focus Group Discussions for the External Review of IPBES

Purpose of the Study:

In decision IPBES-10/1, the IPBES Plenary approved the terms of reference for a midterm review under the rolling work programme of IPBES up to 2030, with the aim of enhancing the Platform's effectiveness. An external review, to be completed by early 2026, has been commissioned to assess IPBES's performance and impact to date and to provide recommendations for strengthening its future work.

This external review is being conducted by an independent review panel appointed by the IPBES Bureau and MEP. As part of this process, the panel is conducting interviews and focus group discussions with a range of stakeholders to explore the key issues identified during the internal review in depth. Your participation will contribute to this collective assessment of the Platform's effectiveness.

Participant Inclusion Criteria:

Participants in this study include individuals with professional insight, experience and/or long term engagement with IPBES, including but not limited to government representatives, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, scientists, practitioners, IPBES experts and authors, policy stakeholders, NGOs, and international organizations.

Your Involvement:

If you agree to participate, you will take part in an individual interview or a focus group discussion lasting approximately 45 and 90 minutes respectively. You will be asked a series of open-ended questions relating to your knowledge, experiences, and views of IPBES and its work.

Confidentiality and Privacy:

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and all information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. Responses will be anonymised in any reports or publications resulting from this study unless you explicitly consent to attribution. No personally identifying information will be shared or published without your permission. Audio recordings (if used) will only be used for transcription and analysis purposes and will be deleted after the review is completed.

Your Rights:

As a participant, you have the following rights:

- You may withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences.
- You may refuse to answer any question or participate in any discussion that makes you uncomfortable.
- You may request a copy of your anonymised contributions to the study.

- You may ask any questions about the review process or your participation at any time.

Contact Information:

If you have any questions or would like to follow up on your participation, please contact: Boris Bozic, external review consultant at bozic.boris88@gmail.com

Consent:

I have read and understood the information provided above and agree to participate in this interview or focus group under the terms described. I understand that I may withdraw at any time and that my anonymity and privacy will be protected.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Annex 2 Online survey results

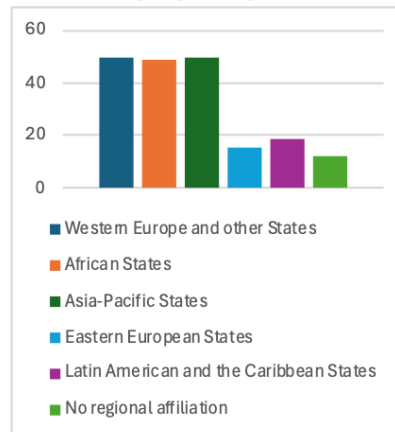
The survey results are presented below. Note that the number of valid responses may vary across questions due to the survey bias correction process. The corresponding number of valid responses is indicated in brackets for each question. In addition, the total number of roles exceeds the total number of respondents, as participants were allowed to select multiple roles that best describe their involvement with IPBES.

About the respondents

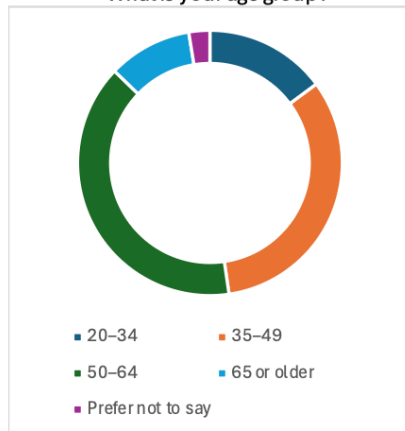
In the role/roles you've selected, how long have you been involved with IPBES?



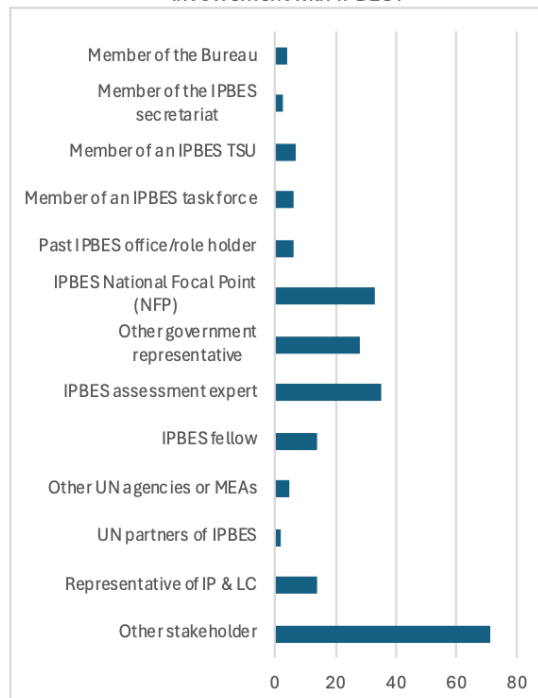
In which region are you primarily based, or do you primarily work?



What is your age group?

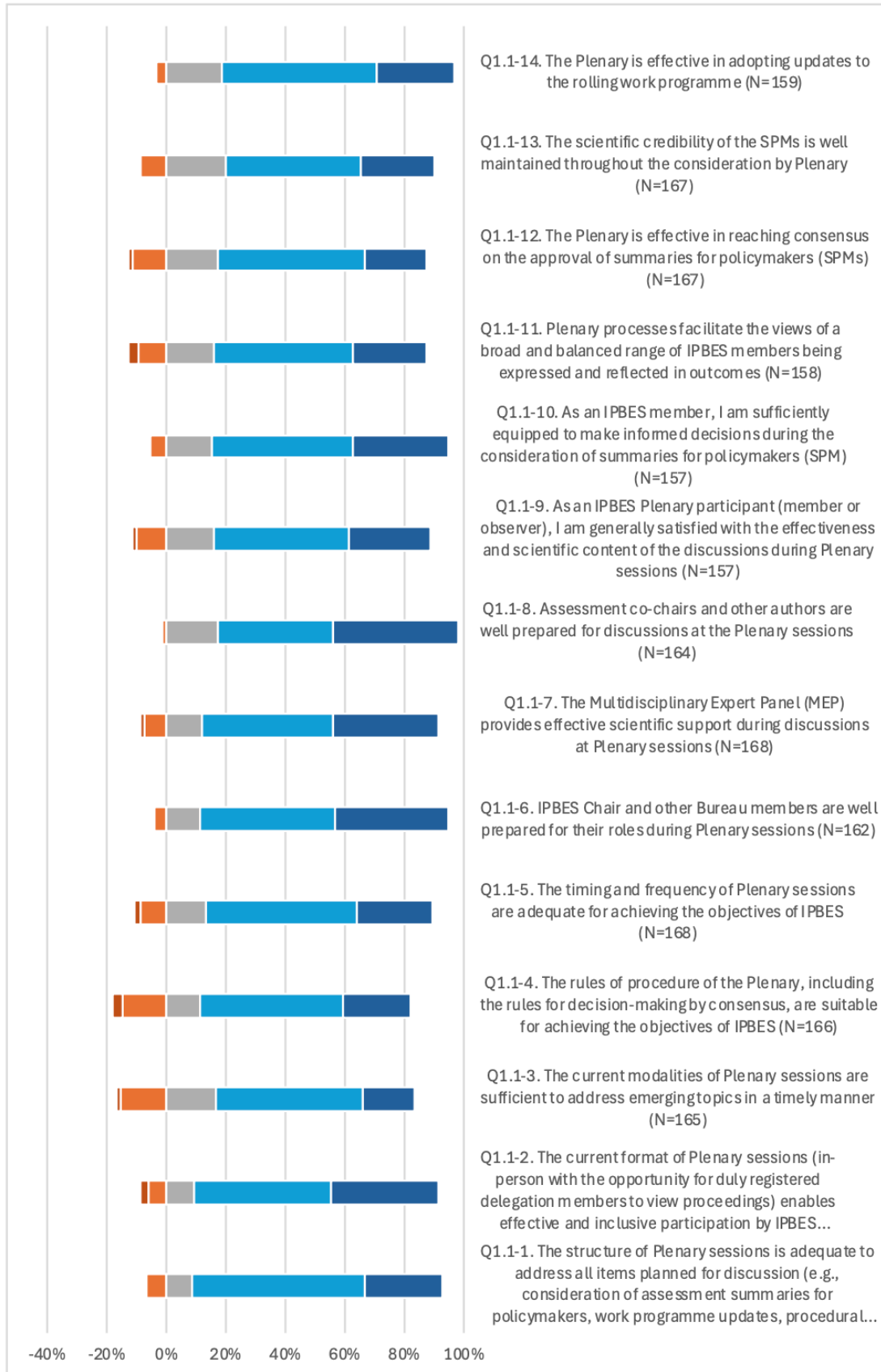


Which of the following best describes your role or involvement with IPBES?

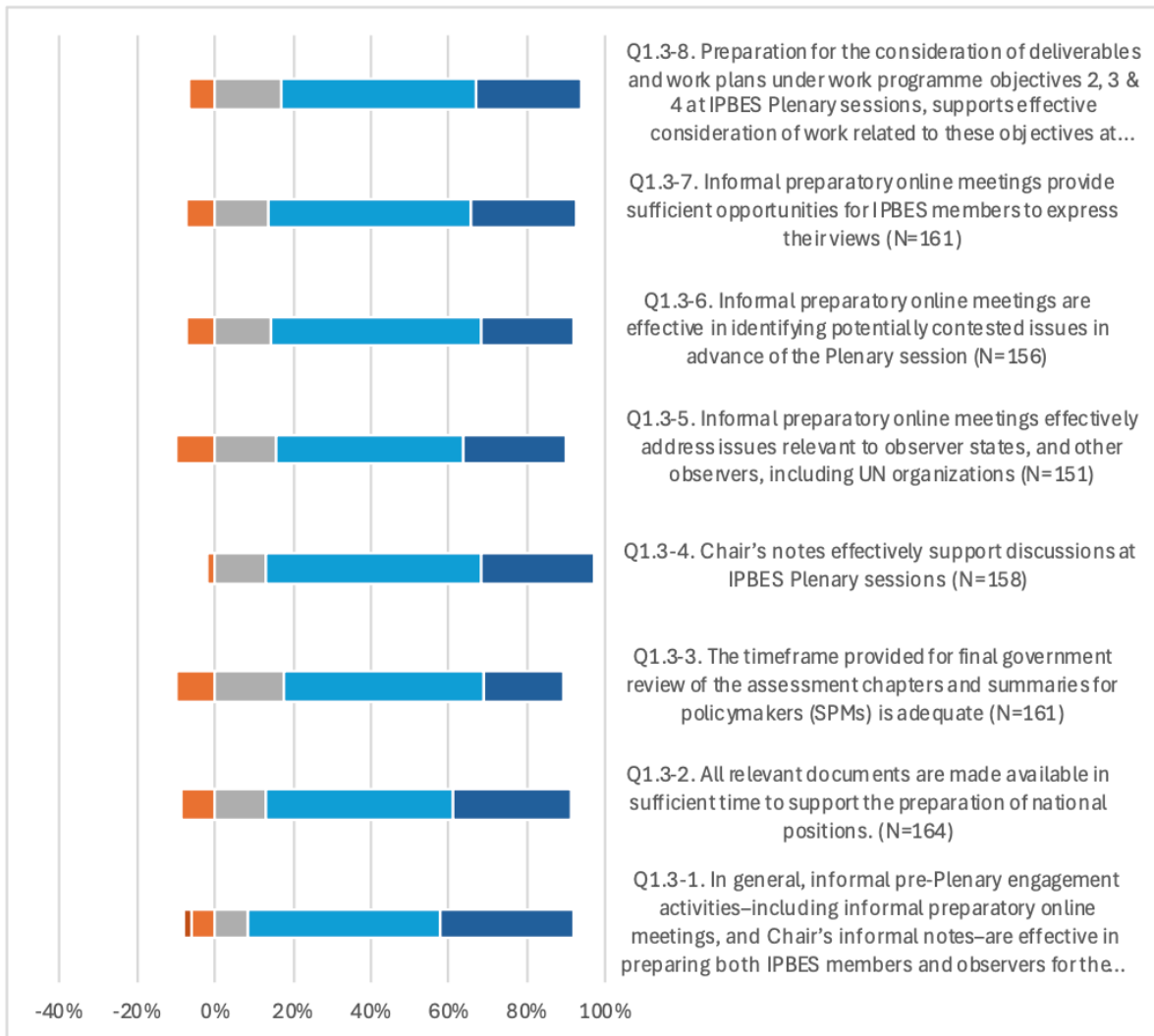


In the following figures colours represent the following: Dark red – strongly disagree; orange – disagree; grey – neither agree nor disagree; light blue – agree; dark blue – strongly agree

1.1 Effectiveness of Plenary sessions and preparatory processes

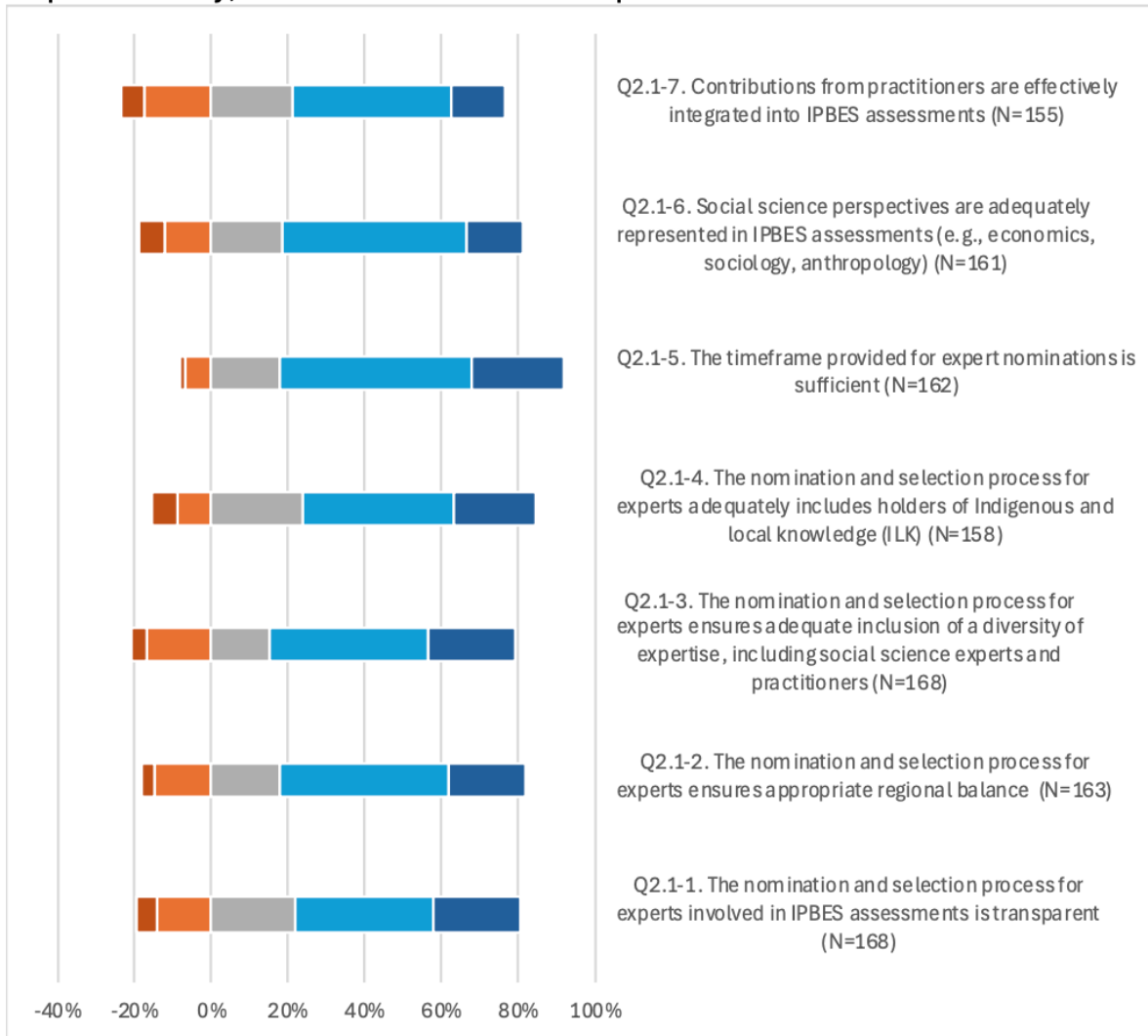


1.2 Effectiveness of Preparatory processes

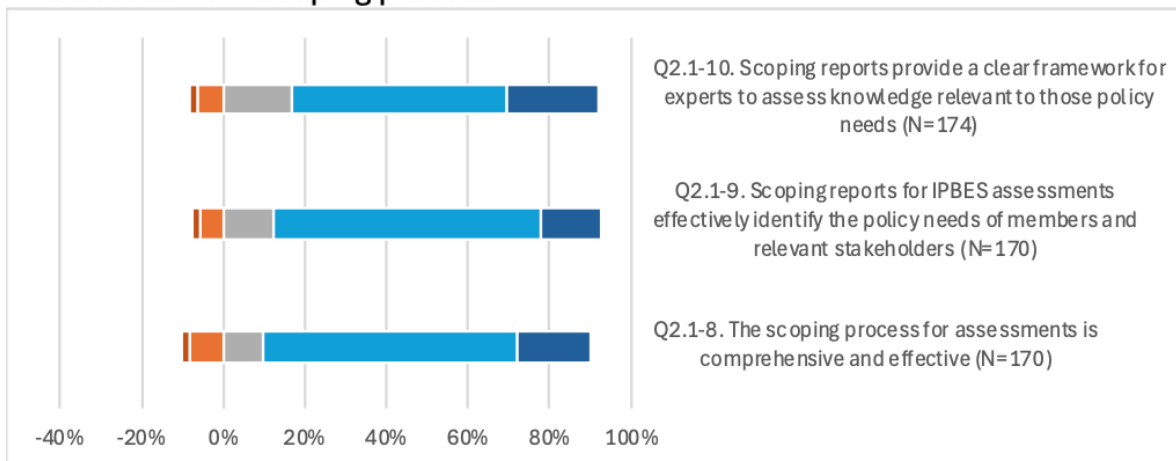


2. Effectiveness of the assessment procedures

Expert diversity, nomination and selection process

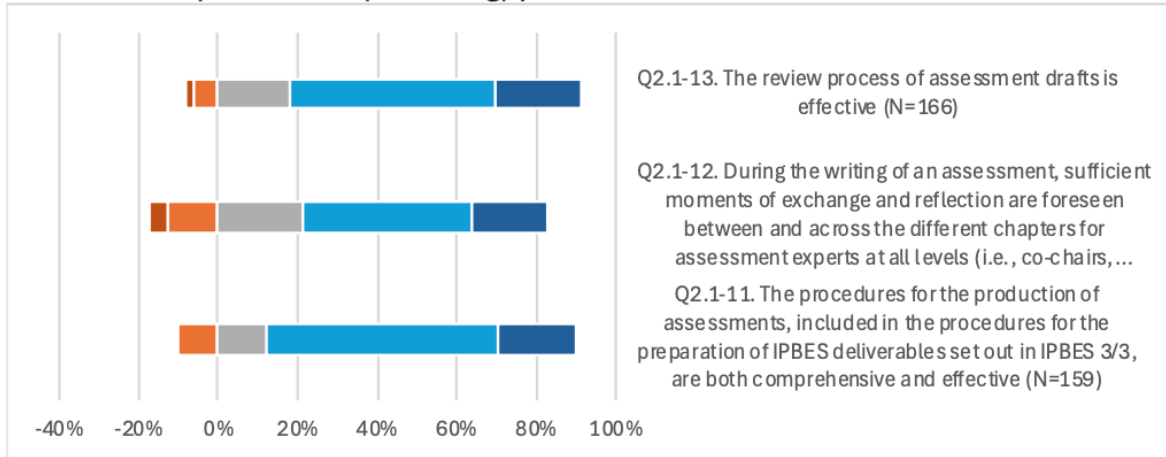


The assessment scoping process

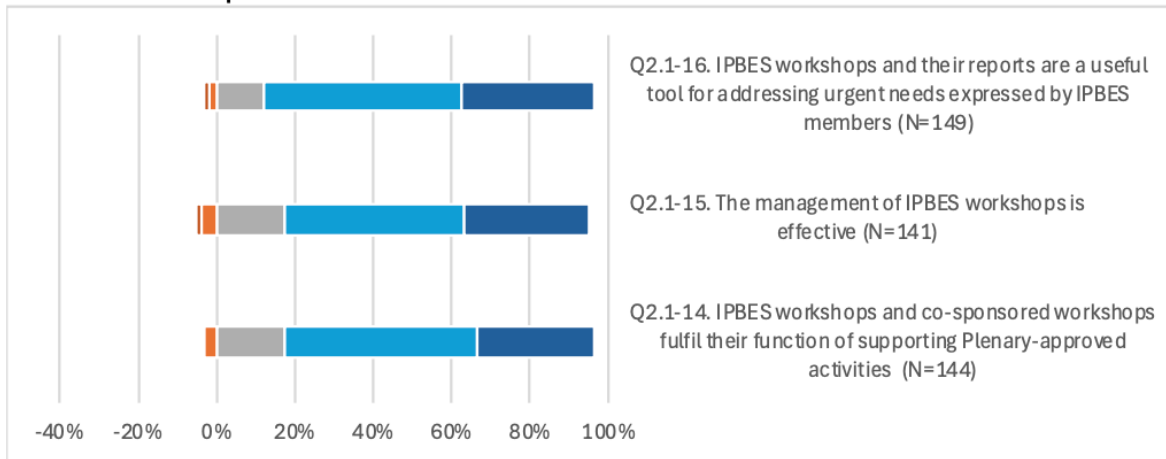


2. Effectiveness of the assessment procedures

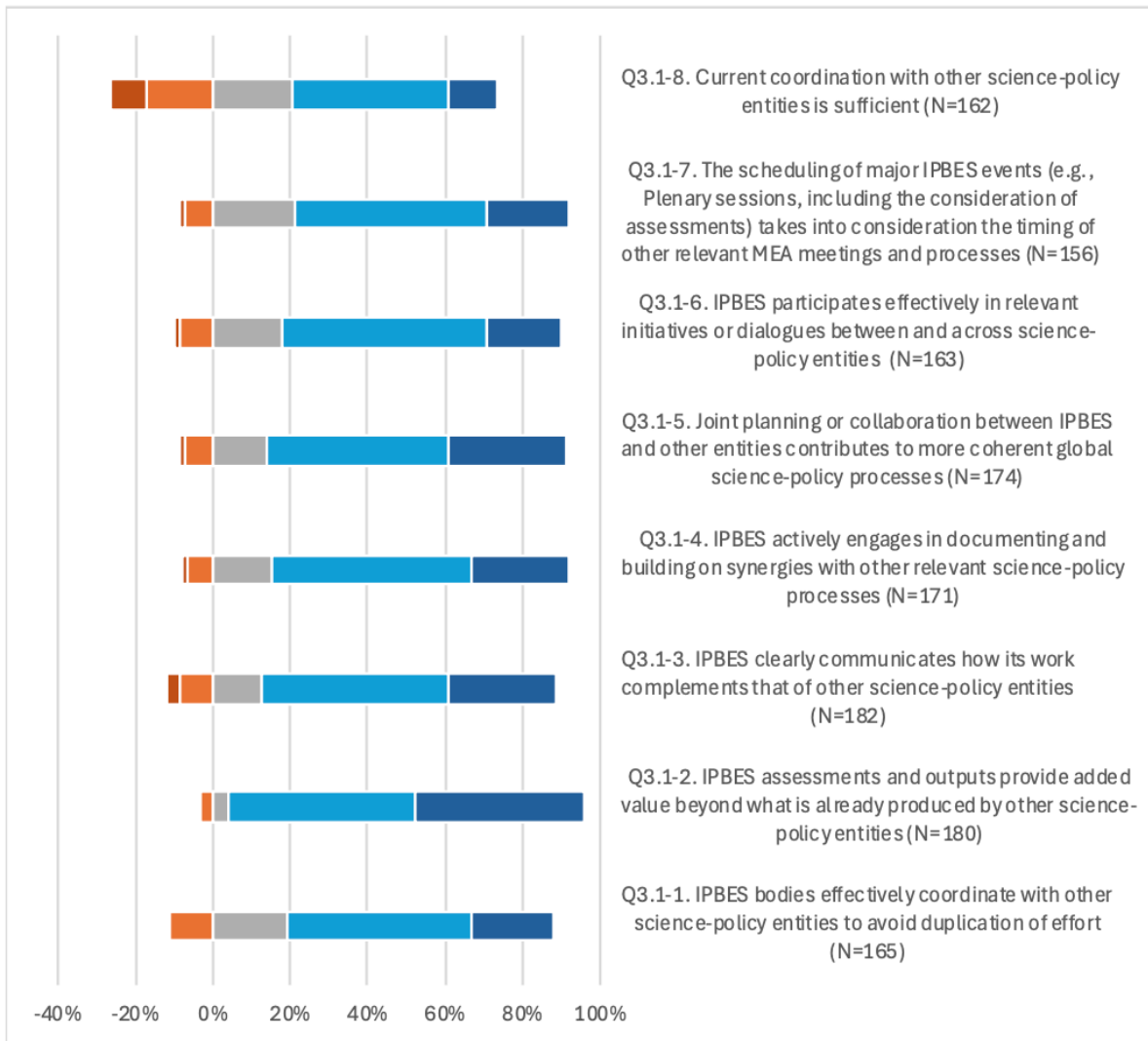
Assessment production (or writing) process



IPBES workshops

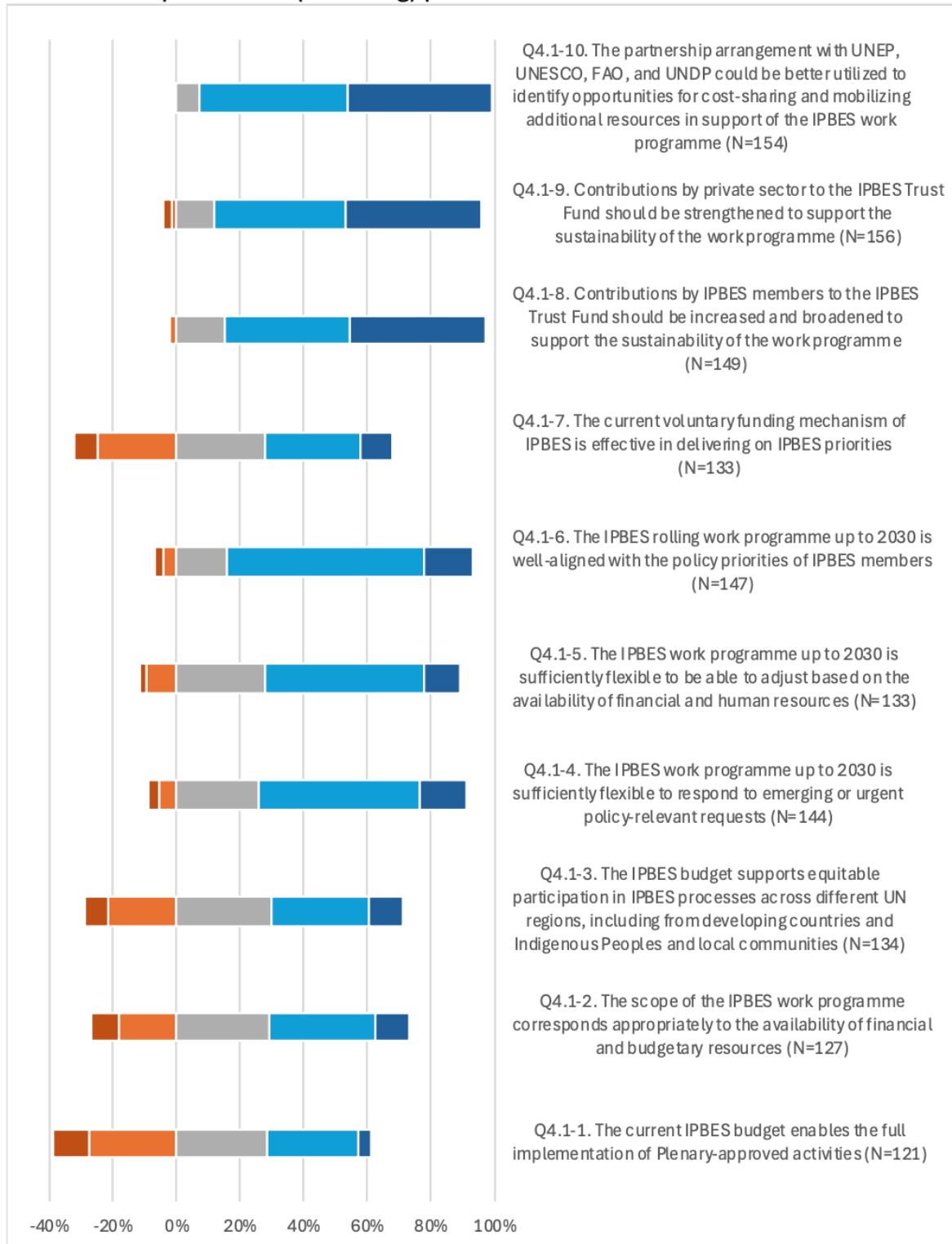


3. Effectiveness of the actions for coherence

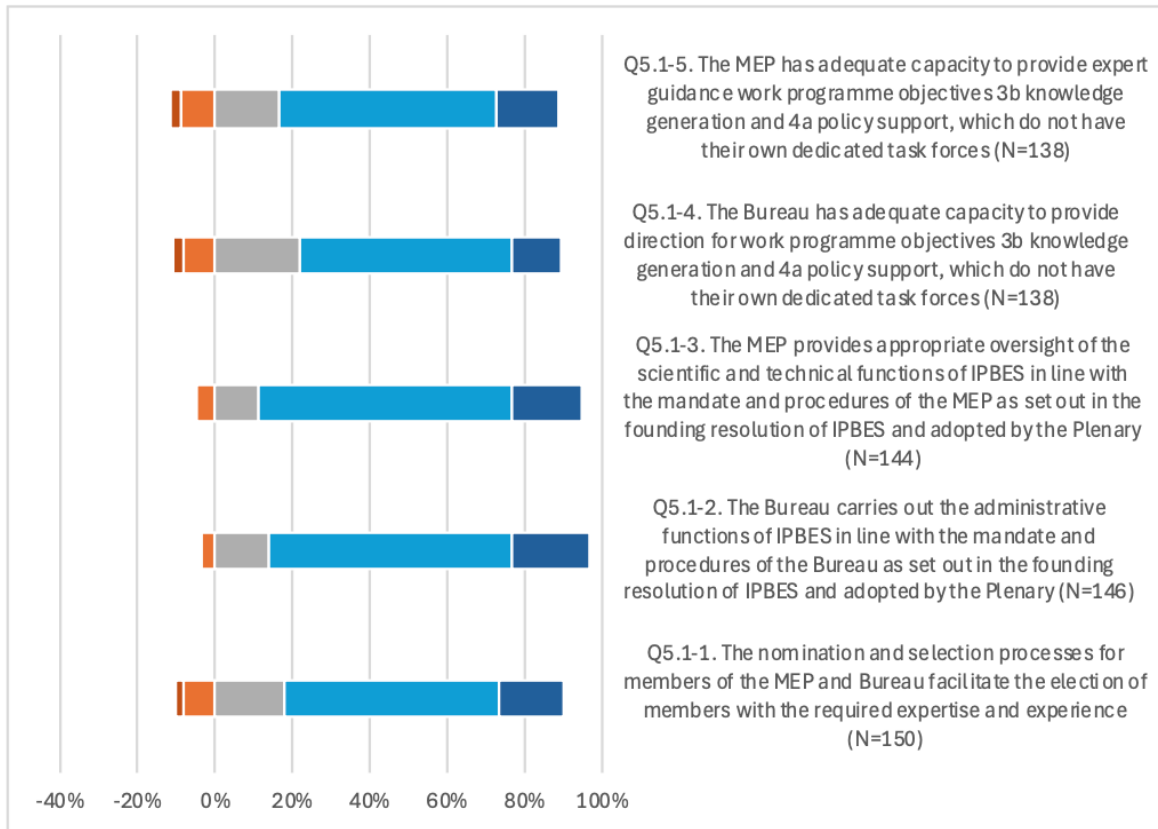


4. Effectiveness of the work programme and budget

Assessment production (or writing) process

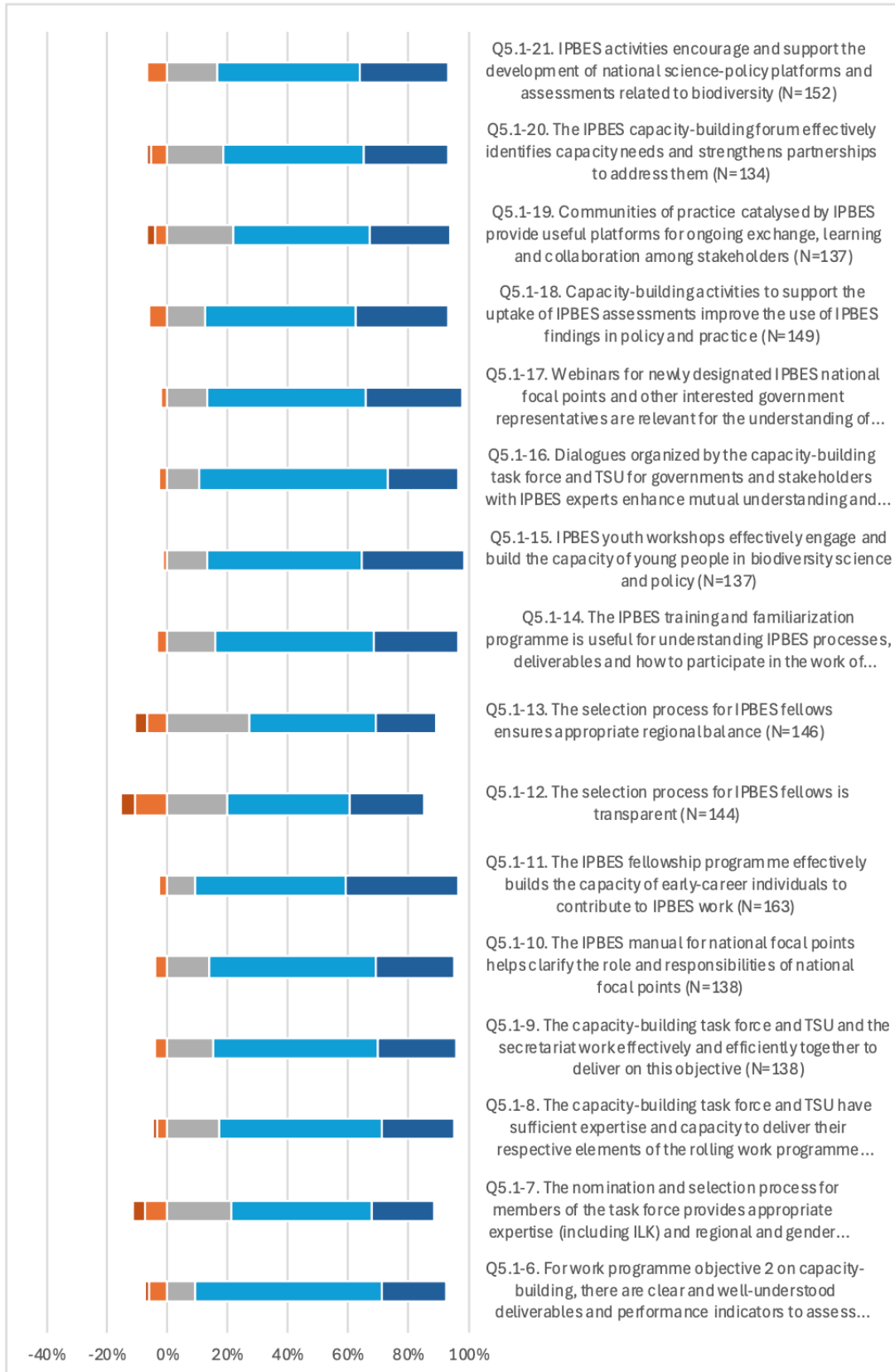


5. Effectiveness of the working arrangements of the Platform MEP and Bureau



5. Effectiveness of the working arrangements of the Platform

Building capacity (Objective 2)

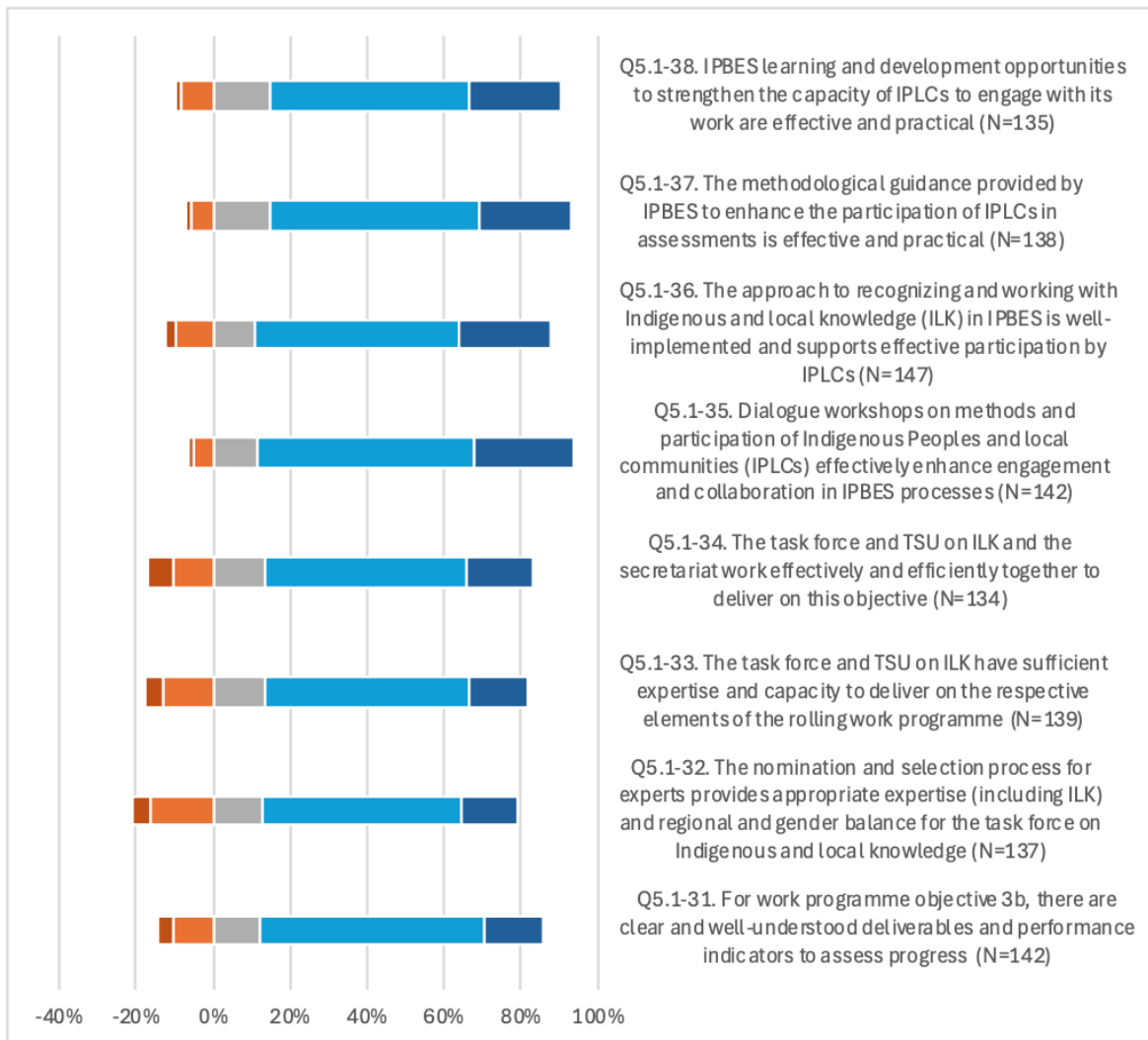


5. Effectiveness of the working arrangements of the Platform

Advanced work on knowledge and data (Objective 3a)

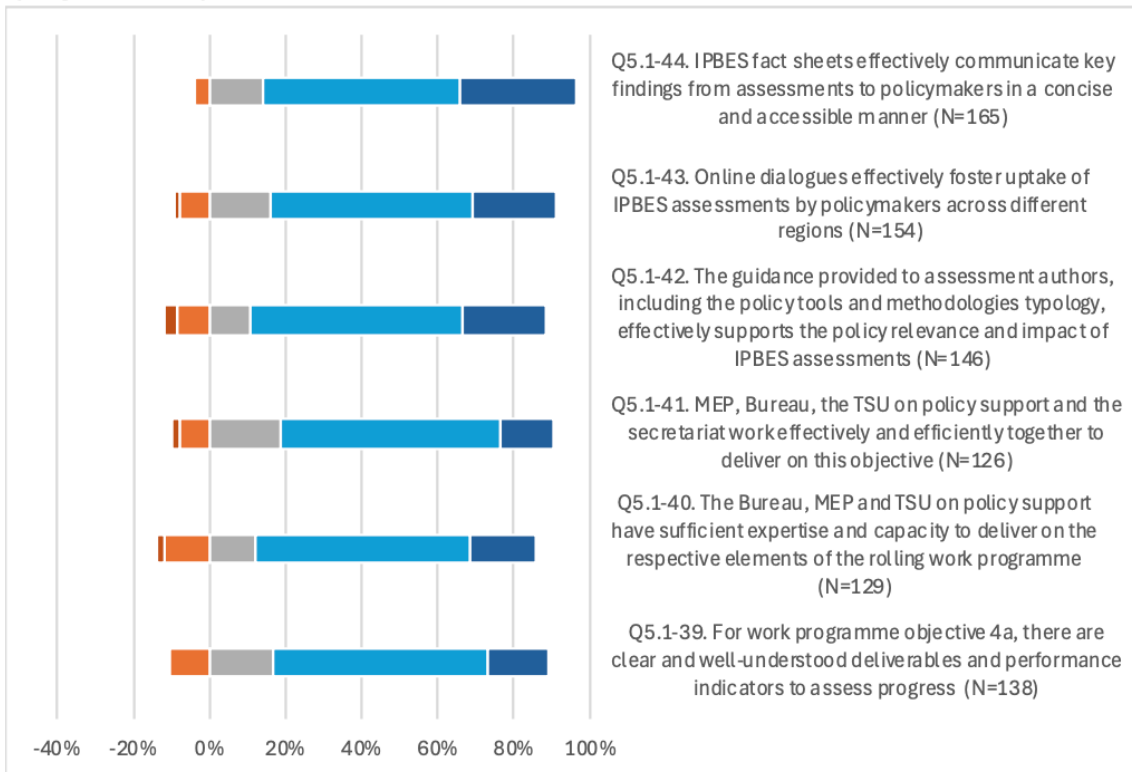


5. Effectiveness of the working arrangements of the Platform Work with Indigenous and local knowledge systems (Objective 3b)

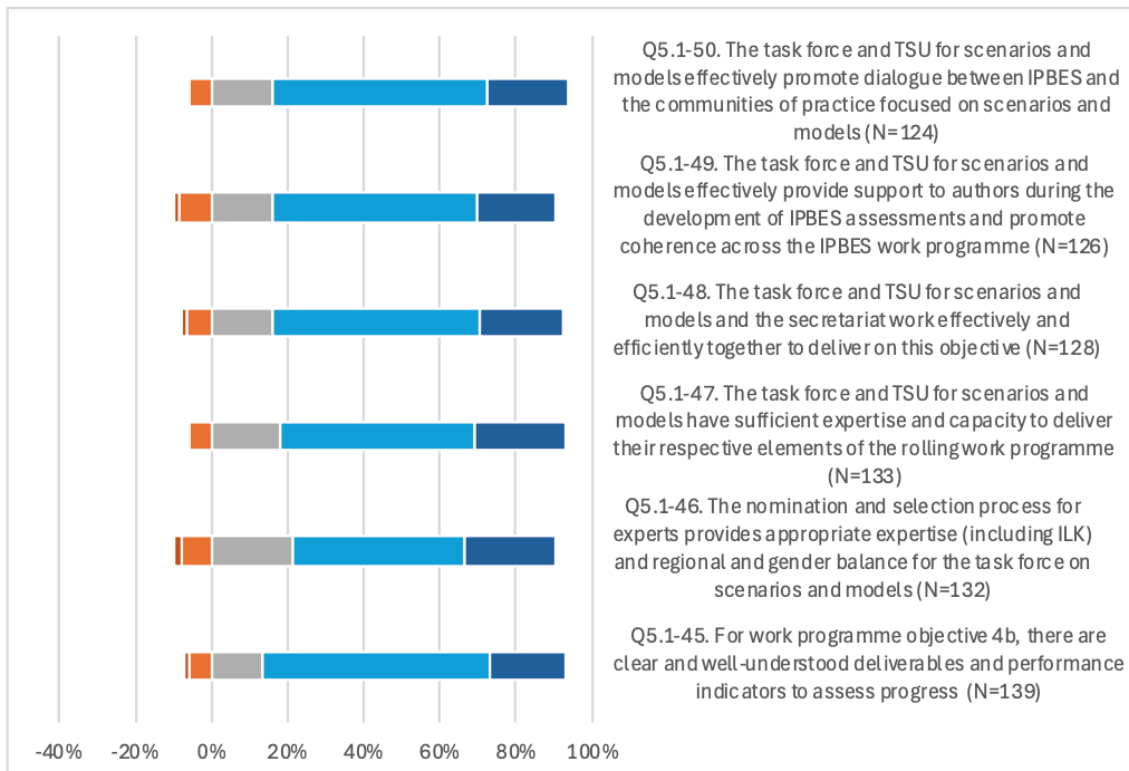


5. Effectiveness of the working arrangements of the Platform

Advanced work on policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies (Objective 4a)

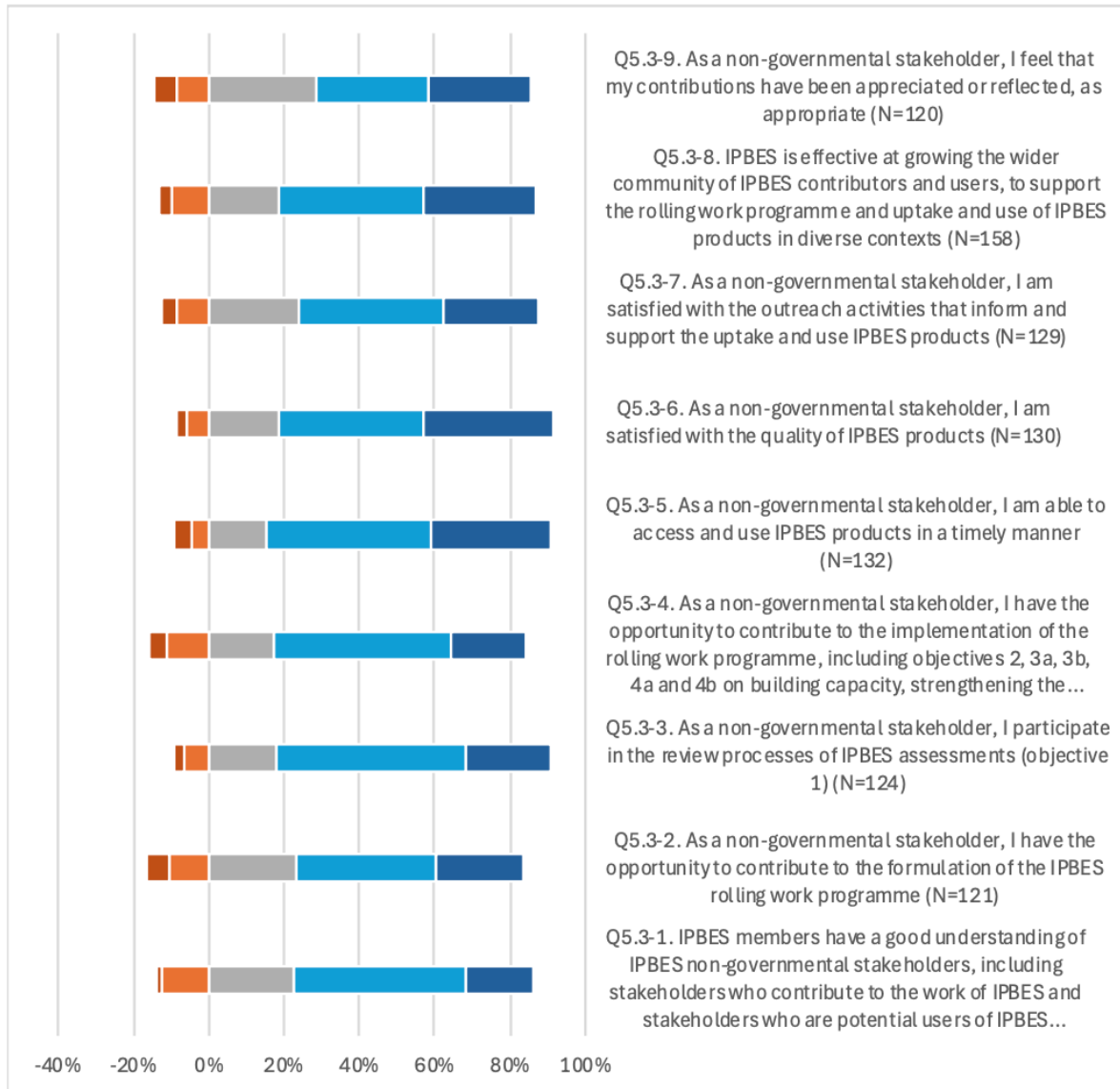


Advance work on scenarios and models (Objective 4b)



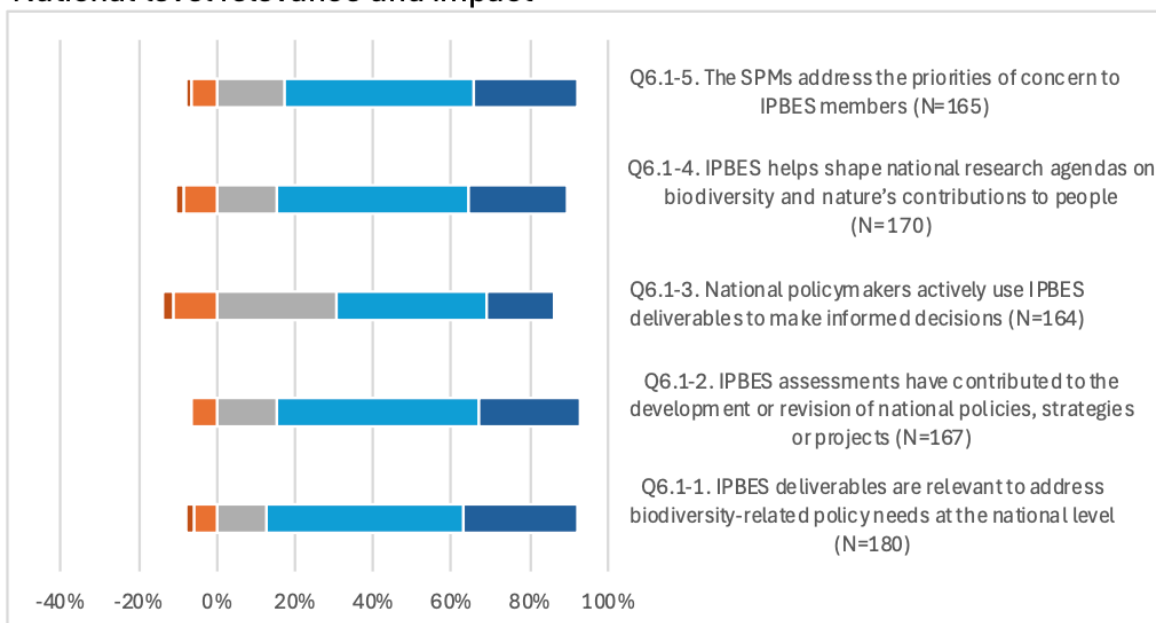
5. Effectiveness of the working arrangements of the Platform

Engagement of non-governmental stakeholders

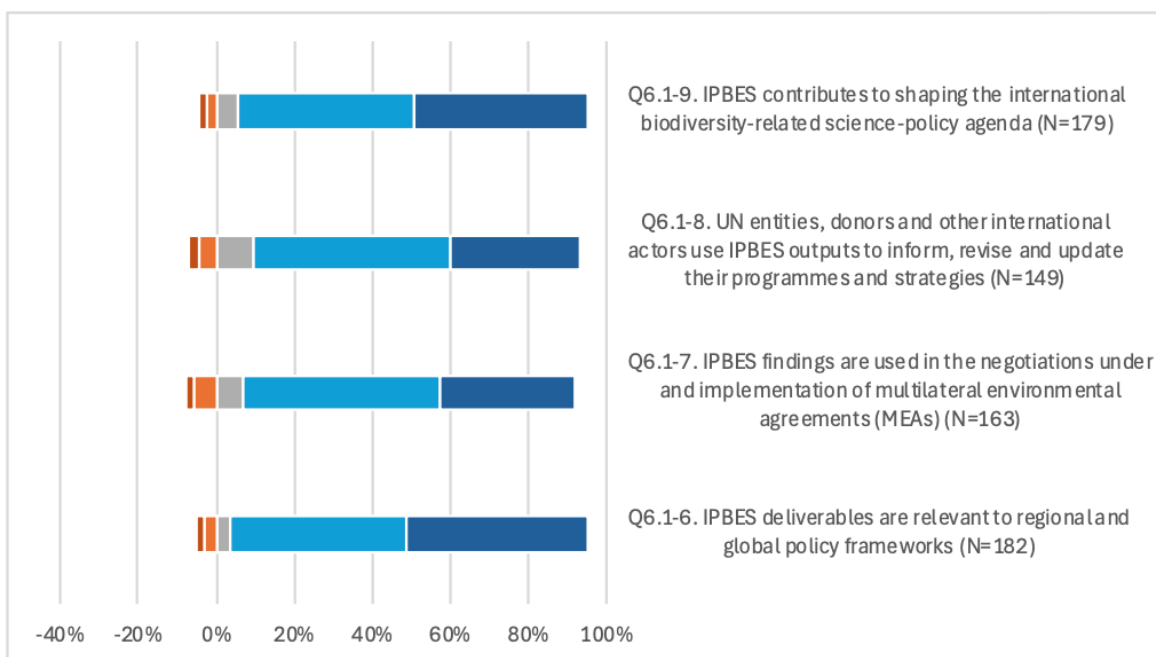


6. Policy alignment and impact

National-level relevance and impact

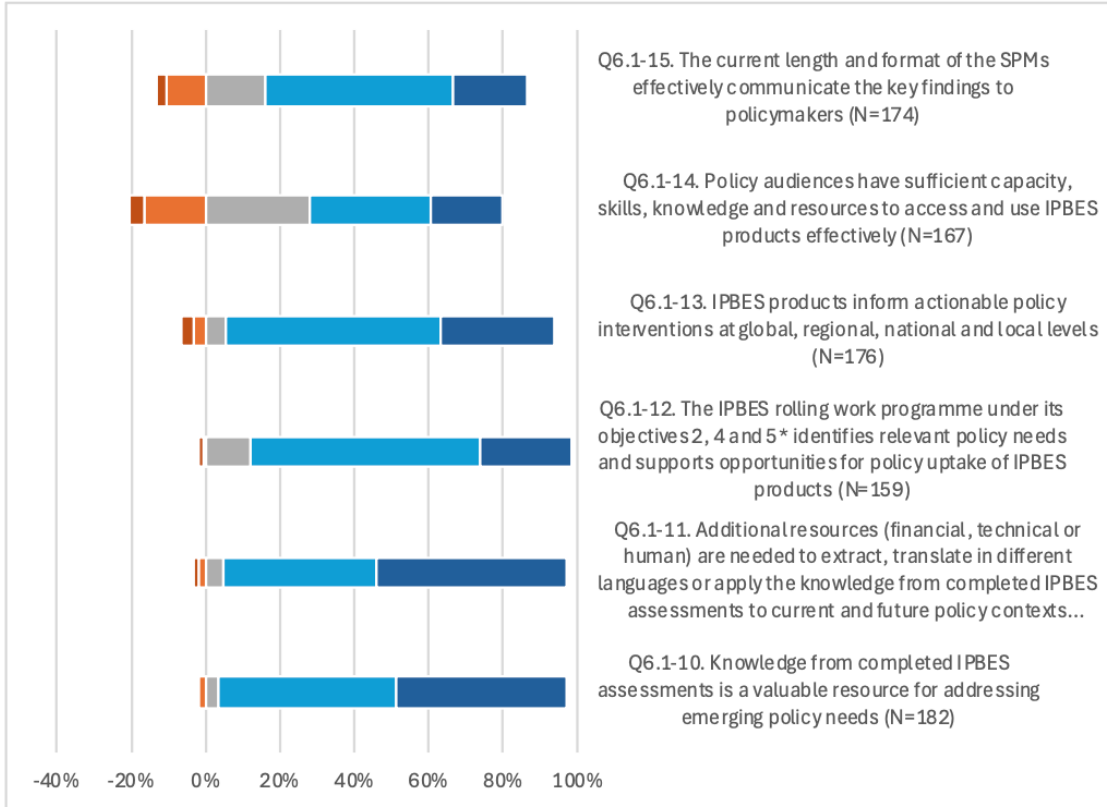


International relevance and impact

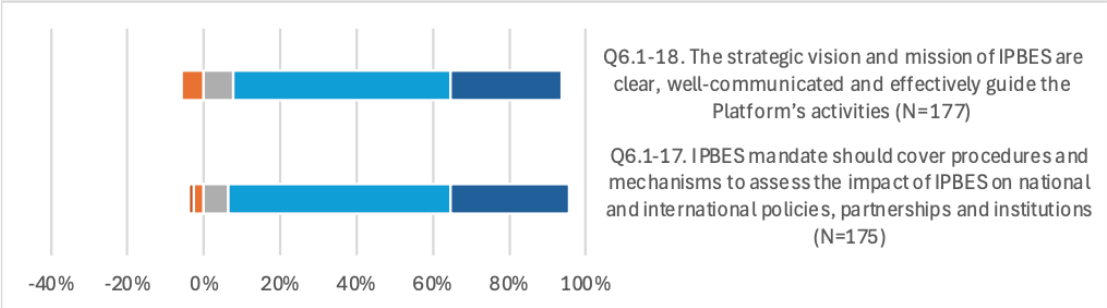


6. Policy alignment and impact

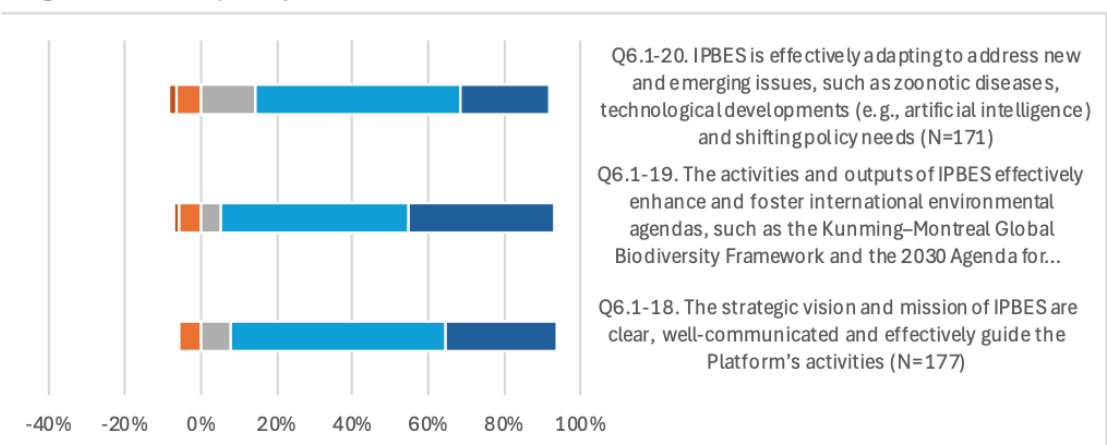
Knowledge use and policy uptake



Policy impacts

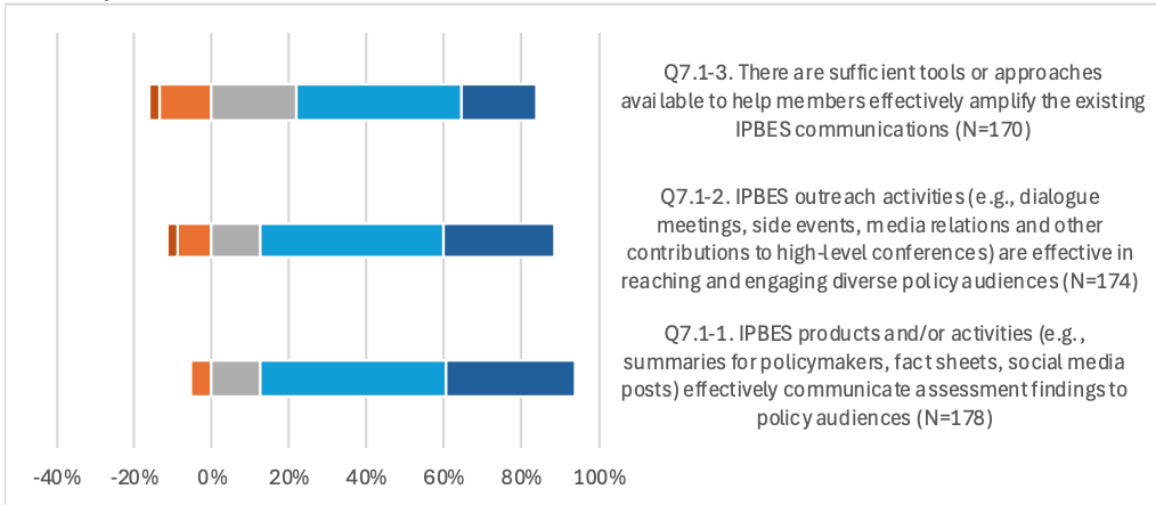


Alignment with policy needs

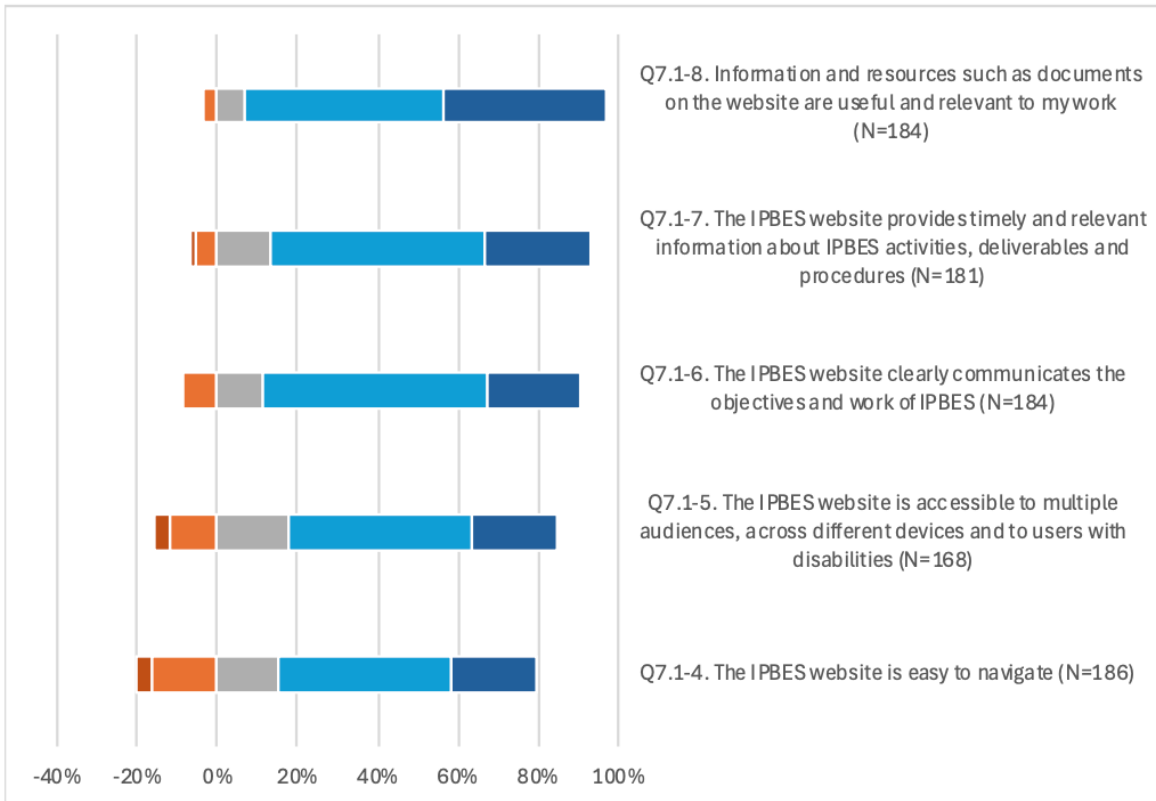


7. Communication and outreach

IPBES products and outreach



IPBES website



8. IPBES operating principles



Annex 3 Analysis of IPBES Objectives 2, 3, 4

Introduction

Task forces (TFs) and technical support units (TSUs), together with the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP) and the Bureau, which have been tasked with supporting the implementation of Objectives 2, 3, and 4, play a central role in achieving the objectives of the IPBES rolling work programme up to 2030 (Figure 6). The abovementioned entities provide the operational foundation, methodological guidance, and technical capacities needed to implement a wide range of activities, from managing assessment data and catalysing the generation of new knowledge to building the technical skills of experts involved in assessments and enhancing the policy relevance of IPBES outputs.

This Annex synthesises the desktop review of Objectives 2, 3 and 4, including an analysis of the current structures that support their implementation. The aim is to provide a clear picture of how the different entities contribute to, and collaborate in, implementing the IPBES rolling work programme up to 2030.

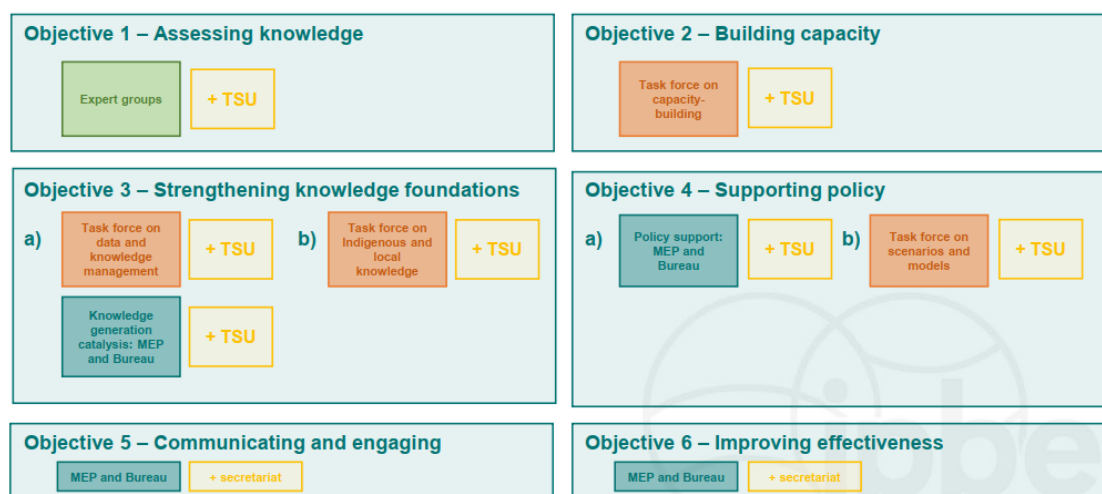


Figure 6 Overview of the six objectives of the IPBES rolling work programme up to 2030 (source: IPBES Secretariat, 2025)

Task forces

The rolling work programme of the Platform up to 2030, in the section on institutional arrangements for its implementation (paragraph 24), states that the Plenary will establish time-bound, task-specific task forces (TF) in support of objectives and deliverables other than assessments, as appropriate, and will decide on their specific terms of reference⁹³.

⁹³ Decision IPBES-7/1

The terms of reference set out the specific mandates of TFs, provisions on their composition (currently between 10 and 15 members), and the length of the members' term of office (currently three intersessional periods).

Following a decision by the Plenary to establish a task force for a specific objective of the work programme, the IPBES secretariat requests nominations from Governments and invites relevant stakeholders to nominate experts to participate. The secretariat compiles the list of nominations and submits it to the MEP and Bureau, which then select experts from these lists⁹⁴.

TF members are not remunerated for their work. TF members from developing countries eligible for support receive travel support for attending the in-person meeting of the task force.

The Plenary, at IPBES 7⁹⁵, established TFs on:

- Capacity-building
- Knowledge and data
- Indigenous and local knowledge
- Scenarios and models of biodiversity and ecosystem services
- Policy tools and methodologies

The term of office of the members of these TFs came to an end at IPBES 10. At that session⁹⁶, the Plenary reviewed the mandates of these task forces, and took the following action:

- Extended the mandate of the TF on capacity-building under Objective 2 (Building capacity), with revised terms of reference;
- Modified the mandate of the TF on knowledge and data under Objective 3(a) (Advanced work on knowledge and data), dividing it into two separate workstreams: (1) data and knowledge management and (2) knowledge generation catalysis. The TF continued to operate under the first workstream, with revised terms of reference;
- Extended the mandate of the TF on Indigenous and local knowledge under Objective 3(b) (Enhanced recognition of and work with Indigenous and local knowledge systems), with revised terms of reference;
- Extended the mandate of the task force on scenarios and models of biodiversity and ecosystem services under Objective 4(b) (Advanced work on scenarios and models), with revised terms of reference; and
- Requested the MEP and Bureau to implement the workplans on knowledge generation catalysis (Objective 3(a2)) and policy support (Objective 4(a): Advanced work on policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies) without establishing TFs.

The specific workplans for each objective and the terms of reference for the four TFs are set out in annexes III–VIII and X–XIII to the Decision IPBES-10/1, respectively. The term of office of the members of the currently existing four TFs will come to an end at IPBES-13, when the Plenary will review their mandates.

⁹⁴ Decision IPBES-3/3, section 7

⁹⁵ The terms of reference of all five task forces was set out in Annex II to Decision IPBES-7/1.

⁹⁶ Decision IPBES-10/1

In addition to the specific terms of reference for each TF, the Plenary decided on general terms of reference applicable to all TFs, which include the following tasks:

- Ensuring that its activities build on complement existing experience.
- Supporting the overall objective and the four functions of IPBES.
- Providing regular progress reports.
- Advising Bureau and the MEP on issues related to its mandate.
- Advising Bureau on the identification of new strategic partners and collaborative supporters.
- Encouraging the direct involvement of its members, as appropriate, in activities of other IPBES task forces and expert groups to foster the coherent implementation of the rolling work programme up to 2030 through the four functions of IPBES.

Furthermore, at each of its sessions, the Plenary decides on the specific set of activities to be undertaken by the TFs (or by the MEP and Bureau, in the case of knowledge generation and policy support) during the coming intersessional period — the workplans for each objective. The activities listed in the workplans translate the respective terms of reference into concrete action for an intersessional period, thereby advancing the implementation of the corresponding work-programme objective.

The most recent workplans are set out in annexes II–VII to the Decision IPBES-11/1, which detail the activities to be undertaken between IPBES-11 and IPBES-12. Indicators for measuring the effectiveness of these workplans are included in annex VIII of the same decision.

Technical support units

The rolling work programme up to 2030 states that the secretariat provides technical support for the implementation of the IPBES rolling work programme, which for some of the objectives will be complemented by a technical support unit, as appropriate.

The secretariat issues a call for offers to host a specific TSU, inviting Governments and relevant organizations to submit offers, including in-kind support for the establishment of the TSU. The offers are prepared in accordance with the completion of standard templates providing the following information:

- an application form, using a template;
- a copy of the certificate of registration of the entity which will host the technical support unit; and
- a copy of the latest audited financial statement of the entity which will host the technical support unit.

The host institution of a TSU is selected by the IPBES Bureau. Institutional arrangements are subsequently made in accordance with the applicable rules and procedures of UNEP, i.e. a “project cooperation agreement” is concluded between UNEP and the host institution. TSU members are paid employees of the host institution. IPBES contributes to the financing of the TSUs through funding provided under the project cooperation agreements. The TSU works under the authority of the Executive Secretary.

Under the rolling work programme up to 2030, the following technical support units were or are in operation:

From IPBES 7 to IPBES 10:

- TSU on capacity-building at the Norwegian Environment Agency
- TSU on the data management aspect of knowledge and data at Senckenberg Society for Nature Research, Frankfurt, Germany.
- TSU on the knowledge generation aspect of knowledge and data at Biodiversa+, hosted by French Foundation for Biodiversity Research (FRB) in Paris
- TSU on ILK at UNESCO, Paris
- TSU on policy support at UNEP-WCMC, Cambridge
- TSU on scenarios and models at PBL in Wageningen, Kingdom of the Netherlands.

From IPBES 10 to IPBES 13 following changes occurred:

- TSU on knowledge generation at Office Français de la Biodiversité (OFB), Paris, France
- TSU on scenarios and models moved at IGES, Japan.

The desktop review of objectives 2, 3 and 4 included an analysis of the structures in place for their implementation⁹⁷. The findings are summarised in Table 4 and informed the review of the results of the interviews and the online survey.

⁹⁷ Decision-7/1, Decision-10/1 and Decision-11/1 and information provided on the IPBES website and by the secretariat

Table 4 Activities and role distributed between Plenary, Bureau, MEP, TFs and TSUs to implement objectives 2, 3 and 4

Objective 2 – Building capacity			
<u>Responsibilities:</u> The task force on capacity-building oversees and takes part in the implementation of the three deliverables under Objective 2 of the rolling work programme: enhancing learning and engagement; facilitated access to expertise and information; and, strengthened regional and national capacities in accordance with relevant decisions by the Plenary and its subsidiary bodies, including by framing the work and guiding the secretariat and the dedicated technical support unit. (Annex X to decision IPBES-10/1).			
Body	Structure Terms of reference in Annex X to decision IPBES-10/1	Role Terms of reference in Annex X to decision IPBES-10/1	Activities Details of the complex work plan are contained in Annex III to the decision IPBES-10/1. The tasks set out were updated in Annex II to the decision IPBES-11/1.
Plenary	Member countries	Products of the task force are forwarded to the Plenary for its information and consideration, as appropriate.	
Bureau and MEP	Management committee for capacity-building composed of 3 members	<p>The MEP and the Bureau will ensure coordination of activities and synergies across all IPBES task forces and expert groups.</p> <p>At the discretion of the co-chairs of the task force and following consultation with the Bureau, a limited number of additional experts may also be invited to participate in the task force as resource persons.</p> <p>The Bureau and the MEP review the products of the task force and forward them to the Plenary, as appropriate.</p>	<p>Objective 2(a): enhanced learning and engagement: Activities for the implementation of the fellowship programme include issuance of call for the nomination of early-career individuals, training and familiarisation programme; youth workshops; provision of support to the IPBES fellows and alumni network. Activities for the implementation of the training and familiarization programme for IPBES experts and stakeholders include development and promotion of the IPBES webinar series, online tools and videos; training, organization of youth workshops, collaboration with the task force on ILK. Organization of in-person dialogue meetings with national focal points. Online dialogues with national focal points and stakeholders, including with the objective of increasing the policy relevance of, and contributions of practitioners to, the assessments.</p> <p>Objective 2(b): facilitated access to expertise and information: Dissemination of calls for the nomination of experts for scoping processes starting after IPBES 10, and provision of assistance to the MEP for filling gaps in expertise for the expert group. Issuance of a call for contributions to support the uptake of approved IPBES assessments reports and other products. Provision of support for uptake activities for IPBES deliverables organized by other organizations.</p>
Task force	Comprises of up to 18 members selected by Bureau and MEP. Members cover the five UN regions, including up to 3 members from the Bureau and MEP, and members from one or more of the following categories:	<p>The task force on capacity-building will oversee and take part in the implementation of objective 2.</p> <p>The task force will foster interaction with IPBES</p>	

	(a) representatives of qualified national, regional and international scientific and development organizations, centres of excellence and institutions, including experts on Indigenous and local knowledge; (b) recognized individual experts, including Indigenous and local knowledge experts, on matters related to the mandate of the task force.	national focal points and collaboration with strategic partners and collaborative supporters under the guidance of the Bureau.	Further encouragement of the development of communities of practice ⁹⁸ . Collaboration with other task forces in catalysing activities to further build capacity relating to IPBES approaches and processes, including the approach to recognizing and working with ILK in IPBES. Convening of the capacity-building forum. Objective 2 (c): strengthened national and regional capacities Continue to encourage, collaborate with and strengthen national, regional and subregional science-policy platforms, networks and assessments.
TSU (Trondheim, Norway)	Part of the secretariat composed of four members.	Provides technical support to the task force.	
<p>Objective 3a – Data and knowledge management</p> <p><u>Responsibilities:</u> The task force on knowledge and data management oversees and takes part in the implementation of objective 3 (a) of the rolling work programme on advanced work on knowledge and data in accordance with relevant decisions by the Plenary and its subsidiary bodies by supporting assessment experts in identifying, prioritizing and mobilizing existing knowledge and data needed for IPBES assessments and guiding the secretariat, including the dedicated technical support unit, in the management of the data, information and knowledge used in IPBES products, including the development of the web-based infrastructure, to ensure their long-term availability and data interoperability. (Annex XI to decision IPBES-10/1).</p>			
Body	Structure Terms of reference in Annex XI to decision IPBES-10/1	Role Terms of reference in Annex XI to decision IPBES-10/1	Activities Details of the extensive work plan are contained in Annex IV to decision IPBES-10/1. The tasks set out were updated in Annex III to decision IPBES-11/1, which also contains new elements that are briefly highlighted below.
Plenary	Member countries	Products of the task force are forwarded to the Plenary for its information and consideration, as appropriate.	<u>Activities for the maintenance of the data and knowledge management policy and further development of the long-term vision for data and knowledge management will include, as necessary:</u>

⁹⁸ Communities of practice are groups of experts, policymakers and/or practitioners who work to increase access to expertise and information on a specific topic or focus area, both to support the implementation of the IPBES work programme and to increase the reach and impact of work programme deliverables. These communities of practice are self-organizing groups and may have different modalities and working arrangements. See annex II to decision IPBES-9/1

Bureau		The MEP and the Bureau will ensure coordination of activities and synergies across all IPBES task forces and expert groups.	Review and revision of the IPBES data and knowledge management policy; Review and revision of the long-term vision on data and knowledge management; Further development of the draft workplan for the intersessional period 2024-2025.
MEP	Management committee for data and knowledge management composed of 1 Bureau and 2 MEP members.	At the discretion of the co-chairs of the task force and following consultation with the Bureau, a limited number of additional experts may also be invited to participate in the task force as resource persons.	<u>Activities for the provision of support to assessment authors related to data and knowledge management:</u> Documenting and archiving of the work carried out during the development of the IAS assessment. Provision of support for the nexus, transformative change and business and biodiversity assessments, as well as any new assessment. Provision of support for the scoping of any new assessments, on aspects relating to data and knowledge management.
Task force	Comprises of up to 13 members selected by Bureau and MEP. Members cover the five UN regions, including up to 3 members of the Bureau and MEP, and experts from one or more of the following categories: (a) members of expert groups for ongoing IPBES assessments and of other relevant task forces; (b) recognized individual experts on matters related to the mandate of the task force, including data experts from the natural sciences, social sciences and humanities and experts in qualitative and quantitative data analysis, as well as ILK knowledge experts; and (c) representatives of qualified national, regional and	The Bureau and the MEP review the products of the task force and forward them to the Plenary, as appropriate. The task force will oversee and take part in the implementation of objective 3 (a). The task force will: (a) support assessment experts in identifying, prioritizing and mobilizing existing knowledge and data needed for IPBES assessments; (b) Guide the secretariat, including the dedicated technical support unit, in the management of the data and knowledge used in IPBES products, to ensure their long-term availability and traceability	<u>Activities for engagement, as appropriate with other entities, initiatives and service providers on data and knowledge relevant to IPBES:</u> Provision of support to IPBES experts concerning access to, handling of and, if needed, processing of a wide range of external data and knowledge. Provision of support to IPBES experts concerning the application of advanced data technologies and services offered by other entities. Sharing of relevant information on knowledge and data with capacity-building initiatives under biodiversity-related multilateral agreements and with other research centres, as appropriate. <u>Activities to ensure effective implementation of the workplan, including continuing the development and monitoring of a set of relevant indicators for measuring effectiveness (presented at IPBES 11).</u> Annex III to decision IPBES-11/1 contains new elements under the following headers: <u>Activities for the maintenance of the data and knowledge management policy and further development of the long-term vision for data and knowledge management will include:</u> Development of a specific code of practice on the use of artificial intelligence, tailored to the needs of the assessments.

	international scientific organizations, centres of excellence and institutions, including experts on Indigenous and local knowledge ⁹⁹ .		Compilation of a report for IPBES 12 on the outcomes of activities under the item “activities for the maintenance of data and knowledge management policy.
	The task force will foster collaboration with strategic partners and collaborative supporters under the guidance of the Bureau.		
	Currently 10 experts.		
TSU (Frankfurt, Germany)	Part of the secretariat (4 members).	Provides technical support to the task force.	
Objective 3a Strengthening knowledge foundations - knowledge generation catalysis			
<u>Responsibilities:</u> the MEP and the Bureau currently undertake responsibilities of oversight and implementation with regard to actions under Objective 3(a) of the rolling work programme on knowledge generation catalysis including: supporting assessment experts in identifying, prioritizing and mobilizing existing knowledge and data needed for IPBES assessments; supporting the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel in reviewing the knowledge needs and gaps identified through IPBES assessments and other IPBES deliverables and in catalysing the generation of new knowledge and data; and, guiding the secretariat, including the dedicated technical support unit, on knowledge generation catalysis. (Annex V to decision IPBES-10/1).			
Body	Structure No task force, work overseen by Bureau and MEP	Role Decision IPBES-10/1, section VII, para 41.	Activities Details of the extensive work plan are contained in Annex V to decision IPBES-10/1. The tasks set out were updated in Annex IV to decision IPBES-11/1, which also contains new elements that are briefly highlighted below.
Plenary	Member countries	Products are forwarded to the Plenary for its information and consideration, as appropriate.	<u>Activities for the review and further development, based on lessons learned from ongoing assessments, of the process for catalysing the generation of new knowledge, the living guidelines to support assessment authors in identifying knowledge gaps and the template for the collection of knowledge gaps will include the development of a proposal to enhance the early and efficient communication of knowledge gaps.</u>
Bureau	Management committee for knowledge generation catalysis	MEP and Bureau are requested to implement the workplan for the implementation of the	
MEP			

⁹⁹ Within the IPBES approach to recognizing and working with Indigenous and local knowledge, “experts on Indigenous and local knowledge” are understood to be persons who have knowledge about Indigenous and local knowledge and associated issues but are not necessarily from Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

		<p>knowledge generation catalysis aspect of objective 3 (a) of the work programme up to 2030.</p>	<p><u>Activities for the provision of support to assessment authors in identifying knowledge gaps, including in producing a list of knowledge gaps as part of the assessments.</u></p>
<p>Secretariat & TSU (Paris, France)</p>	<p>Part of the secretariat (2 members)</p>	<p>Provides technical support to the MEP and Bureau</p>	<p><u>Activities for the promotion of actions by relevant external organizations and initiatives to address identified knowledge gaps will include:</u> Overseeing the development of a space on the IPBES website where knowledge gaps identified in completed IPBES assessment can be easily accessed, filtered and searched. Overseeing the issuance of a notification by the secretariat communicating the knowledge gaps identified. Providing input to (online) workshops organized by regional networks of research programmers and funders. Development of an outreach strategy and engagement plan to communicate knowledge gaps. <u>The impact of knowledge generation catalysis efforts to effectively fill the identified gaps.</u></p> <p><u>Activities to ensure effective implementation of the workplan include the development of a set of relevant indicators for measuring effectiveness (presented at IPBES 11).</u></p> <p><u>A call for submissions on ways to strengthen the ambition of the work of IPBES on knowledge generation catalysis will be issued after the tenth session of the Plenary (issued after IPBES 10).</u></p> <p>Annex IV to decision IPBES-11/1 contains new elements under the following headers:</p> <p><u>Activities to enhance communication and outreach to catalyse the generation of new knowledge will include:</u> Development of communication materials that will be available on the IPBES website. Organization of, or provision of input to, dialogue meetings to present identified gaps. Further development of the online database on identified knowledge gaps.</p>
<p>Objective 3b) Indigenous and local knowledge</p>			

Responsibilities: The task force on Indigenous and local knowledge oversees and takes part in the implementation of objective 3 (b) of the rolling work programme on enhanced recognition of and work with Indigenous and local knowledge systems, in accordance with relevant decisions by the Plenary of IPBES and its subsidiary bodies, including by implementing procedures and approaches for recognizing and working with Indigenous and local knowledge, by strengthening the implementation of the participatory mechanism and guiding the secretariat, including the dedicated technical support unit. (Annex XII to decision IPBES-10/1).

Body	Structure	Role	Activities
	Terms of reference in annex XII to decision IPBES-10/1	Terms of reference in annex XII to decision IPBES-10/1	Details of the extensive work plan are contained in Annex VI to decision IPBES-10/1. The tasks set out were updated in Annex V to decision IPBES-11/1.
Plenary	Member countries	Products of the task force will be reviewed by the Panel and the Bureau and forwarded to the Plenary for its information and consideration as appropriate.	<u>Activities for the implementation of the approach to recognizing and work with ILK include:</u> Based on the report IPBES/10/INF/9 of the review of inclusion of Indigenous and local knowledge in IPBES functions and deliverables, the task force will draft a workplan (presented for approval at IPBES 11). Support for ILK liaison groups ¹⁰⁰ for assessments. Dialogue workshops with members of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and experts on Indigenous and local knowledge. Scoping process: Collaborate with the MEP in the development of ILK conceptual and methodological approaches. Peer review of assessment reports. Post-assessment activities. Provision of support for the work of other task forces regarding aspects related to ILK. Further development of the methodological guidance on the implementation of the approach to recognizing and working with ILK in IPBES. Extension of the review of ILK in IPBES to include information on the invasive alien species assessment.
Bureau	Management committee for Indigenous and local knowledge composed of 2 MEP members.	The MEP and Bureau will ensure coordination of activities and synergies across all IPBES task forces and expert groups. At the discretion of the co-chairs of the task force and following consultation with the Bureau, a limited number of additional experts on ILK and representatives of Indigenous and local organizations may be invited to participate in the task force as resource persons.	<u>Activities for strengthening the implementation of the participatory mechanism:</u> Collaboration between the MEP and the task force on ILK in the implementation of the participatory mechanism. Engagement with and capacity-building for Indigenous Peoples and local communities.
MEP			
Task force	Comprises of up to 18 members selected by Bureau and MEP.	The task force on ILK will: Support the MEP in implementing the approach	

¹⁰⁰ An Indigenous and local knowledge liaison group is a group of authors working on Indigenous and local knowledge within an assessment

<p>A member of the task force co-chairs the task force with a member of the MEP or the Bureau.</p> <p>Members cover the five UN regions, including up to three members from the Bureau and the MEP and the remaining members from one or more of the following categories: (a) members of expert groups of ongoing IPBES assessments and other relevant task forces; (b) representatives of Indigenous Peoples and local communities; (c) representatives of qualified national, regional and international scientific organizations, centres of excellence and institutions, including experts on Indigenous and local knowledge,⁴⁶ known for their work and expertise on issues related to the mandate of the task force; and (d) recognized individual experts on matters related to the mandate of the task force.</p> <p>Currently 14 experts.</p>	<p>to recognizing and working with ILK in IPBES. Guide the secretariat the dedicated TSU, in supporting the Panel in implementing the approach. The task force will foster collaboration with strategic partners and collaborative supporters under the guidance of the Bureau.</p>	<p>Further development of the ILK section of the IPBES website to improve usability and the display of information. Further development of the communication and engagement strategy for strategic partners and collaborative supporters. Monitoring of participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and experts on ILK in IPBES processes. Engagement with relevant IPBES-related network, including BESnet.</p> <p>Activities to ensure effective implementation of the workplan include the development and monitoring of a set of relevant indicators for measuring effectiveness (presented at IPBES 11).</p>
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<p>TSU (UNESCO, Paris, France)</p>	<p>Part of the secretariat (1 member)</p>	<p>Provides technical support to the task force.</p>
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Objective 4a) Supporting policy
Responsibilities: the MEP and the Bureau currently undertake responsibilities of oversight and implementation with regard to actions under Objective 4(a) of the rolling work programme on policy support including: facilitating a dialogue process on the future role of the policy support functions; increasing the policy relevance of IPBES assessments; promoting and supporting the use of IPBES products in decision-making; ensuring the effective implementation of the workplan include the development and monitoring of a set of relevant indicators for measuring effectiveness as presented at IPBES 11; and, guiding the secretariat, including the dedicated technical support unit on policy support.

Body	Structure	Role	Activities
Plenary	Member countries	Products are forwarded to the Plenary for its information and consideration, as appropriate	<u>Activities to facilitate a dialogue process on the future role of the policy support function will include:</u>
Bureau		MEP and Bureau are requested to implement the workplan for the implementation of objective 4 (a) of the work programme up to 2030.	Issuance by the secretariat of a call for inputs on the future role of the policy support function, institutional arrangements, proposals for draft terms of reference, and ways to strengthen the implementation of objective 4 (a) (fourth quarter of 2023).
MEP	Management committee for policy support composed of 2 Bureau and 2 MEP members.		Facilitation of online dialogues with NFPs, experts and other relevant stakeholders. Development of a concept note on the future role of the policy support function and ways to strengthen the implementation of objective 4 (a). Presentation of options for ways to strengthen the implementation of objective 4(a) and options for future institutional arrangement.
TSU (Cambridge, UK)	Part of the secretariat (3 members)	Provides technical support to the MEP and Bureau	<u>Activities to increase the policy relevance of IPBES assessments will include:</u> Provision of support to assessment experts with a view of increasing the policy relevance of assessments. Organization of online dialogue workshop with practitioners to facilitate the contribution of practitioners to the scoping of any new assessments. Online dialogues with NFPs and stakeholders with the objective of increasing the policy relevance of the assessments. Fostering of the participation of policy practitioners in assessments through online dialogue workshops.
			<u>Activities to promote and support the use of IPBES products in decision-making will include:</u> Finalisation of fact sheets on the assessment on invasive alien species and their control. Preparation of draft fact sheets for the nexus and transformative change assessments that are targeted to specific sectors. An in-person dialogue meeting with NFPs to further enhance the capacity of Governments to use completed assessments and other IPBES outputs in policy- and decision-making.

Strengthening the role of national and (sub-)regional science-policy platforms, networks and assessments in promoting the use of IPBES deliverables in policy- and decision-making.

Regional online dialogue meetings with actors at the science-policy interface.

Conducting of a second edition of the survey on the use of IPBES assessments in policymaking at national and subnational levels to gather information relating to new IPBES assessments (fourth quarter 2023).

Encouragement of the addition of examples of the successful use of completed IPBES assessments in policy- and decision-making to the IPBES impact-tracking database (TRACK).

Activities to ensure the effective implementation of the workplan include the development and monitoring of a set of relevant indicators for measuring effectiveness (presented at IPBES 11).

Annex VI to decision IPBES-11/1 contains new elements under the following headers:

Activities will be undertaken to ensure the effective implementation of the work plan. Those activities will include continued monitoring of a set of relevant indicators for measuring effectiveness and the further development of these indicators.

Activities for ensuring the IPBES assessment reports and other products are policy relevant.

Activities for supporting the use by decision makers in all relevant sectors of completed IPBES assessment reports and other IPBES products.

Objective 4b) Scenarios and models

Responsibilities: The task force on scenarios and models oversees and takes part in the implementation of objective 4 (b) of the rolling work programme on advanced work on scenarios and models of biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, in accordance with relevant decisions by the Plenary of IPBES and its subsidiary bodies, including actions to: provide support for scenarios and models for assessments; promote dialogue between IPBES and communities of practice on scenarios and models; and, catalyse the further development of scenarios and models for future IPBES assessments. (See further Details in annex XIII to decision IPBES-10/1).

Body	Structure	Role	Activities
	Annex XIII to decision IPBES-10/1		

		Annex XIII to decision IPBES-10/1	Details of the extensive work plan are contained in Annex VIII to decision IPBES-10/1. The tasks set out were updated in Annex VII to decision IPBES-11/1, which also contains new elements that are briefly highlighted below.
Plenary	Member countries	Products will be forwarded to the Plenary for its information and consideration, as appropriate.	<u>There is a need to further develop the methodological guidance on the Nature Futures Framework, including for Mother Earth-centric scenarios and models.</u> <u>Activities to provide support for scenarios and models for assessments will include:</u>
Bureau MEP	Management committee for scenarios and models composed of 1 Bureau and 3 MEP members.	Products of the task force will be reviewed by the MEP and the Bureau.	Peer review of drafts of the nexus and transformative change assessments and the business and biodiversity assessments (2023-2024).
Task force	Comprises of up to 18 members selected by Bureau and MEP. Members cover the five UN regions, including up to three members from the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, with the remaining members being experts on scenarios and models from the natural sciences, the social sciences and humanities, and Indigenous and local knowledge systems, as well as on quantitative and qualitative approaches to scenarios. The task force will cover a diverse range of expertise to ensure effective engagement with the communities of practice on scenarios and models and other future studies Currently 15 experts and 2 fellows	The task force will: Implement the work on scenarios and models on the terms of reference for the further development of tools and methodologies regarding scenarios and models. Guide the secretariat, including the dedicated technical support unit. The task force will, under the guidance of the Bureau, foster collaboration with strategic partners and engagement with collaborative supporters that are developing and applying relevant scenarios and models.	Mobilizing experts in scenarios and models and other futures studies beyond the task force to encourage them to contribute to upcoming assessments. Providing advice and input on scenarios and models to IPBES assessment author groups, including the engagement of task forces members as contributing authors, or through the provision of materials and the organization of webinar, upon request. Engaging with scenarios and models experts of other intergovernmental processes to foster coherence and an exchange of ideas among assessment processes. Organizing an in-person workshop to the reflection on scenarios and models that better account for different knowledge systems. Presenting a report, including additional methodological guidance at IPBES 12. <u>Activities to promote dialogue between IPBES and communities of practice on scenarios and models including both nature-centred and Mother Earth-centred scenarios and models, and to catalyse the further development of scenarios and models for future IPBES assessments, will include.</u> Mobilizing existing communities on scenarios and models and other futures studies to facilitate the development of scenarios and models relevant to the work of IPBES, and thereby also support the work of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements. Providing guidance and information on the work of IPBES with regard to scenarios and models. Catalysing the production of scenarios and models in various places and at various scales by encouraging the global communities of practice to work at the regional scale.
TSU (Tokyo, Japan)	Affiliated to the secretariat (4 members).	Provides technical support to the task force.	

Preparing a compilation of gaps and needs regarding nature-centred scenarios and models set out in completed IPBES assessments and using it to communicate to the scientific community IPBES needs with respect to the adjustment of existing scenarios and models and the development of new scenarios and models.

Collecting examples of the development of scenarios using the Nature Futures Framework.

Engaging with various stakeholders, including experts in modelling, social sciences and the humanities and in ILK, as well as policymakers and private-sector actors through participation in relevant international meeting and conferences, including planned ILK dialogues.

Activities to ensure effective implementation of the workplan the development and monitoring of a set of relevant indicators for measuring effectiveness (presented at IPBES 11).

Annex VII to decision IPBES-11/1 contains new elements under the following headers:

Activities to promote dialogue between IPBES and communities of practice on scenarios and models including both nature-centred and Mother Earth-centred scenarios and models, and to catalyse the further development of scenarios and models for future IPBES assessments, will include.

Fostering coherence in and facilitating the exchange of ideas regarding scenarios and models that are applicable across multiple intergovernmental processes.

Annex 4 Analysis of IPBES indicators

Indicators were collected and analysed against a logical framework (logframe), as one of the most commonly used frameworks in monitor and evaluation (Lamhauge, et al. 2013). The logframe classifies the indicators into five types: input, activity, output, outcome, and impact indicators. The purpose of each indicator type and number of indicators used to monitor the implementation of objectives 2, 3 and 4 are presented in the table below (Table 5), while all indicators with their associated types (as assigned by the reviewers) are provided in Table 6. In total, 45 indicators were reviewed.

In addition, the Fundraising Strategy, Communication Plan, and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy were analysed, and no established indicators were identified. However, the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy includes 11 draft indicators (Table 7), which require further development.

The review was based on the following IPBES decisions: IPBES-5/6 on the fundraising strategy, IPBES-4/4 on communication and stakeholder engagement, and IPBES-11/1 on indicators for measuring the effectiveness of the implementation of the workplans for objectives 2, 3 and 4 of the IPBES Rolling Work Programme up to 2030.

Table 5 Number of indicators by indicator type for monitoring the implementation of objectives 2,3 and 4

Indicator type	Purpose	No of indicators	% of total
Input	measure resources invested	0	0%
Activity	measure what is done	9	20%
Output	measure immediate tangible outputs	25	56%
Outcome	measure short to medium term results	10	22%
Impact	measure long-term effects	1	2%

Table 6 Each indicator for monitoring the implementation of objectives 2,3 and 4 classified by reviews into indicator types

Indicator	Indicator type
I. Has IPBES enhanced the capacities of individuals and institutions to strengthen the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services?	
A. Building capacities to achieve enhanced learning and engagement	
1. Number of fellows and number of alumni of the fellowship programme selected for intergovernmental science-policy panel roles;	Outcome
2. Number of individuals and number of institutions who participated in, or used, training and familiarization activities and materials (e.g., workshops, webinars, guides and learning tools);	Output
3. Number of government representatives and number of stakeholders who participated in science-policy dialogue meetings;	Output
4. Feedback from participants on the usefulness of the capacity-building activity they participated in.	Output ¹⁰¹
B. Facilitating expertise and information	
1. Number of capacity-building activities supporting uptake of IPBES assessments and deliverables that IPBES has been made aware of;	Outcome

¹⁰¹ If the feedback is collected later, and it reflects changes in knowledge, attitudes, or skills as a result of the training, then it becomes an outcome indicator.

2.	Number of participants and number of institutions taking part in the IPBES capacity-building forum.	Output
C. Strengthening national and regional capacities		
1.	Number of new national and (sub)regional science-policy platforms, networks and assessments that IPBES has been made aware of;	Outcome
2.	Number of stakeholders and government representatives who participated in online dialogue workshops encouraging the development of national and (sub)regional platforms, networks and assessments.	Output
II. Has IPBES identified, prioritized and facilitated access to existing data and knowledge for use by assessment authors and documented access to data and knowledge contained in completed assessments in an open and reusable way?		
The reports on the conformity of the assessments with the data and knowledge management policy, prepared by the task force on data and knowledge management for each assessment, remain the main reference for ensuring the effective implementation of the workplans for objective 3 (a). In addition, the following indicators will be reported for each assessment:		Activity
1.	Number of data management reports and corresponding number of views and downloads from Zenodo;	Output
2.	Whether the task force and the technical support unit provided comments related to data and knowledge management aspects during external reviews;	Activity
3.	Number of Zotero library records;	Output
4.	Number of figures adapted or produced under creative commons licences;	Output
5.	Number of ad hoc technical meetings with the expert team;	Activity
6.	Number of ad hoc technical meetings with external data and service providers;	Activity
7.	Number of ad hoc technical and hands-on meetings with global and regional stakeholders to facilitate access to underlying data and knowledge from the completed assessments.	Activity
III. Has IPBES identified gaps in knowledge and data in IPBES assessments completed in this intersessional period, systematically catalogued them, and catalysed the generation of new knowledge by making those gaps known, including to research funding agencies, research programme developers and institutions involved in prioritizing and funding data mobilization?		
A. Efforts made to support the identification of knowledge gaps in IPBES assessments		
1.	Whether the assessments include a synthesis and a detailed explanation of knowledge gaps identified in the assessment.	Output
B. Efforts made to catalyse the generation of new knowledge		
1.	Number of dialogues communicating the knowledge gaps organized per assessment by IPBES and by research funding agencies, research programme developers and institutions involved in prioritizing and funding data mobilization;	Activity
2.	Number of participants in those dialogues;	Output
3.	Geographical coverage of those dialogues;	Output
4.	Number of knowledge gaps addressed; number of new projects and/or amount of funds catalysed to address the knowledge gaps included in completed IPBES assessments that IPBES has been made aware of.	Outcome ¹⁰²
IV. Has IPBES implemented the approach to recognizing and working with Indigenous and local knowledge, including the participatory mechanism established under the approach?		
These indicators will be monitored alongside the review of Indigenous and local knowledge in IPBES, which will periodically collect qualitative information from authors and Indigenous Peoples and local communities engaged in IPBES activities. The results of the 2023 review and the 2024 extension of the review are available on the IPBES website.		

¹⁰² the second part of the indicator might qualify as an impact indicator

A. Consideration of Indigenous and local knowledge in assessments		
1.	Numbers of assessment experts in the Indigenous and local knowledge liaison groups of each assessment;	Output
2.	Inclusion of information on Indigenous and local knowledge and/or Indigenous Peoples and local communities in summaries for policymakers;	Outcome
3.	Number of citations of reports of Indigenous and local knowledge dialogue workshops in assessments;	Outcome
4.	Whether the task force and the technical support unit provided comments related to Indigenous and local knowledge during external reviews;	Activity
5.	Number of items added to the Zotero library on Indigenous and local knowledge.	Output
B. Participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in IPBES processes:		
1.	Number of participants in dialogue workshops, webinars, calls for contributions and other activities.	Output
V. Has IPBES supported the assessment of policy instruments, policy support tools and methodologies in IPBES assessments and enabled the uptake of the findings of the assessments in decision-making?		
A. Provision of support to assessments		
1.	Number of training sessions provided to assessment experts on the policy landscape;	Activity
2.	Number of participants attending those training sessions;	Output
3.	Degree of satisfaction of assessment experts with the training sessions;	Output
4.	Number of policy experts and practitioners involved in the expert groups for IPBES assessments.	Output
B. Provision of support for the use of assessments in decision-making		
1.	Number of participants in online dialogues on the use of assessments in decision-making;	Output
2.	Number of views and downloads of fact sheets;	Output
3.	Number of examples of the use of IPBES assessments in policymaking (results from survey and entries in the TRACK impact tracking database);	Outcome ¹⁰³
4.	Mentions of IPBES assessments in decisions, reports and other documents of relevant multilateral environmental agreements.	Impact
VI. Has IPBES provided advice to assessment authors on the use of existing scenarios and models and catalysed the development of new scenarios and models for the future work of IPBES?		
A. Provision of relevant input into IPBES assessments and other IPBES products		
1.	Whether task force members reviewed or contributed to an assessment report or a scoping report;	Activity
2.	Number of assessment experts participating in webinars and similar information activities organized for them by the task force;	Output
3.	Degree of satisfaction of assessment experts with webinars and similar events organized for them by the task force (assessed through feedback from participants);	Output
4.	Degree of effectiveness of the liaison process and of principles for facilitating collaboration between assessment experts and the task force for particular assessments.	Output
B. Uptake by communities of practice		
1.	Number of scientific papers (peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, conference proceedings) and reports related to the Nature Futures Framework cited during the intersessional period;	Outcome

¹⁰³ This could qualify as an impact indicator if the element in the TRACK database refers to policy impacts

2.	Number of scientific papers (peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, conference proceedings) and reports published during this intersessional period mentioning the Nature Futures Framework or other scenario and modelling exercises relevant to the work of the task force;	Outcome
3.	Number of references in global and national policy documents to the Nature Futures Framework and other biodiversity-focused scenarios during the intersessional period.	Outcome
C. Outreach and dissemination by the task force		
1.	Number of views of the IPBES online webinar that introduces scenarios and models, including the Nature Futures Framework;	Output
2.	Number of downloads of the methodological guidance on the use of the Nature Futures Framework from Zenodo;	Output
3.	Degree of satisfaction with workshops, webinars and meetings co-hosted or organized by IPBES to disseminate knowledge to the community of practice (assessed through feedback from participants).	Output

Table 7 Draft indicators for monitoring the success of stakeholder engagement

Indicators for successful stakeholder engagement	Description
Commitment to stakeholder engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a strategy and an implementation plan • Evidence of consultations with stakeholders • Evidence of clear and accurate policies and processes explaining how stakeholders can get involved and in which areas
Capacity to address challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • References to obstacles to stakeholder engagement and the steps planned to surmount them (e.g., hard-to-reach stakeholders, language or cultural barriers, diverse agendas or interests, etc.)
Extent of engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metrics assessing engagement (e.g., number of nominations, peer review comments, participants, fellowships, etc.)
Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metrics assessing representation of stakeholders from different countries, regions, disciplines, etc.
Evidence of outputs and impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of the relation between the purpose of engagement and its expected outcomes • Evidence of achieved impacts
Opportunities for two-way communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calls for input on issues related to stakeholder engagement • Surveys to provide feedback on the engagement • Evidence of stakeholder issues and concerns being addressed

Literature

Lamhauge, N., Lanzi, E., & Agrawala, S. (2013). The use of indicators for monitoring and evaluation of adaptation: Lessons from development cooperation agencies. *Climate and Development*, 5(3), 229–241.