



## IPBES Webinar Series – Webinar 1: The IPBES Assessment Process

**Host:** The IPBES task force and technical support unit on capacity-building

**Presenter:** Ivar Baste, Bureau member and task force co-chair



[www.ipbes.net](http://www.ipbes.net)

## Welcome to the IPBES webinar 1

- Welcome to the very first webinar in the IPBES Webinar Series!
- A further 10 webinars are tentatively planned for the series during 2016
- Information about upcoming webinars will be posted on the events calendar at [www.IPBES.net](http://www.IPBES.net) and circulated via email
- We will have a Q&A-session at the end of the webinar. You can submit questions using the toolbar facility in the GoTo-webinar interface

# IPBES Establishment

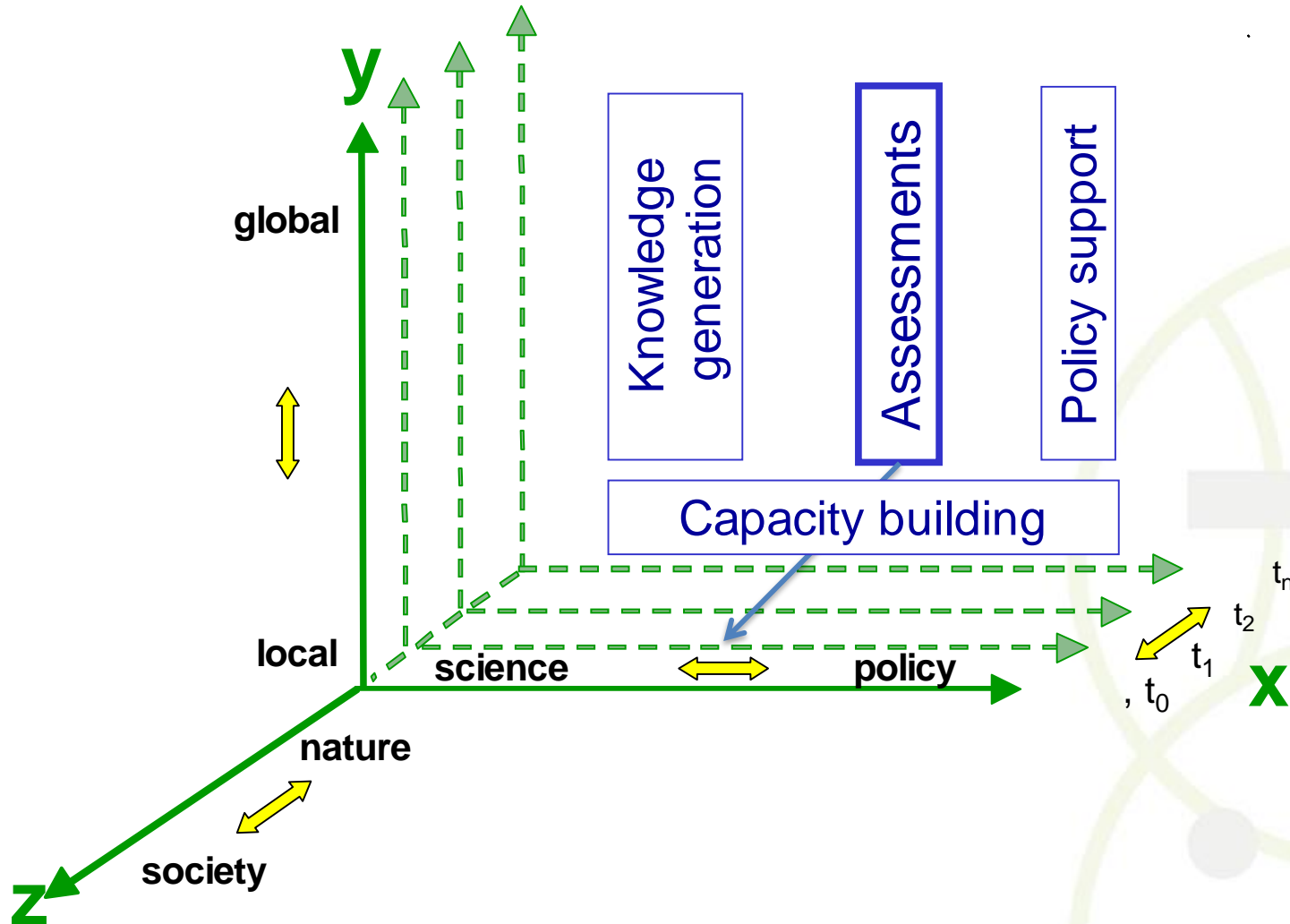
Following extensive consultation, IPBES was established by Governments in April 2012 with the aim of:

***“strengthening the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long-term human wellbeing and sustainable development”.***

124 Governments are now members of the IPBES an independent body of a legally non-binding nature administered by UNEP.



# IPBES Functions



## IPBES assessments in a nutshell

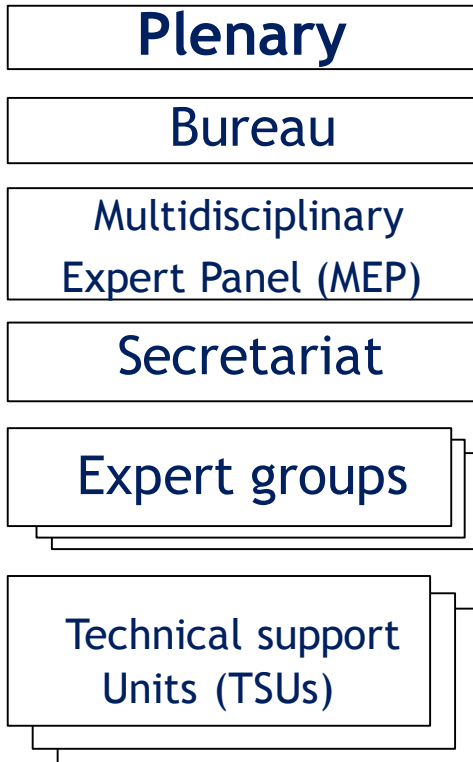
- IPBES critically assesses the state of knowledge on the interactions between human societies and the natural world from an international perspective.
- The different analyses typically involve in-kind contributions by hundreds of leading experts from multiple disciplines in science as well as from indigenous and local knowledge systems.
- Their involvement follows a rigorous process which in essence helps separate facts from fiction. IPBES presents the confidence level of the knowledge and policy tools at hand in support of policy-making and further knowledge generation.

# Governance of IPBES assessments

## Constitution

Goals, functions and operating principles ( i.a. on credibility, relevance, legitimacy, independence, involvement, gender & cooperation)

### *Institutional arrangements:*



### *Governance tools:*

- Rules of Procedures for the Plenary
- Work programme 2014-2018 (WP)
- Trust Fund
- Procedures for the preparation of Platform deliverables (scoping, expert selection, preparation, review and approval of assessments; use of ILK; addressing errors & conflict of interest)
- Conceptual Framework
- Guidelines (assessments, scenarios, valuation) and catalogs on assessments (and policy support tools)

# The assessment guide

(Available here: [Guide on the production and integration of assessments from and across all scales](#))

## Introduction

- What is IPBES? what is an IPBES assessment? How to use this guide?

## Section I: Addressing Conceptual issues

- The IPBES Conceptual Framework and how to use it; IPBES assessments across scales

## Section II: Applying the IPBES Assessment Processes

- The IPBES assessment process; Using confidence terms

## Section III: Use of Methodologies in Assessments

- Values; Role of scenarios and models; Indigenous and Local Knowledge; Data; Knowledge, Information and Data (KID) Gaps; Indicators

## Section V: Enhancing the Utility of Assessments for Decision Makers and Practitioners

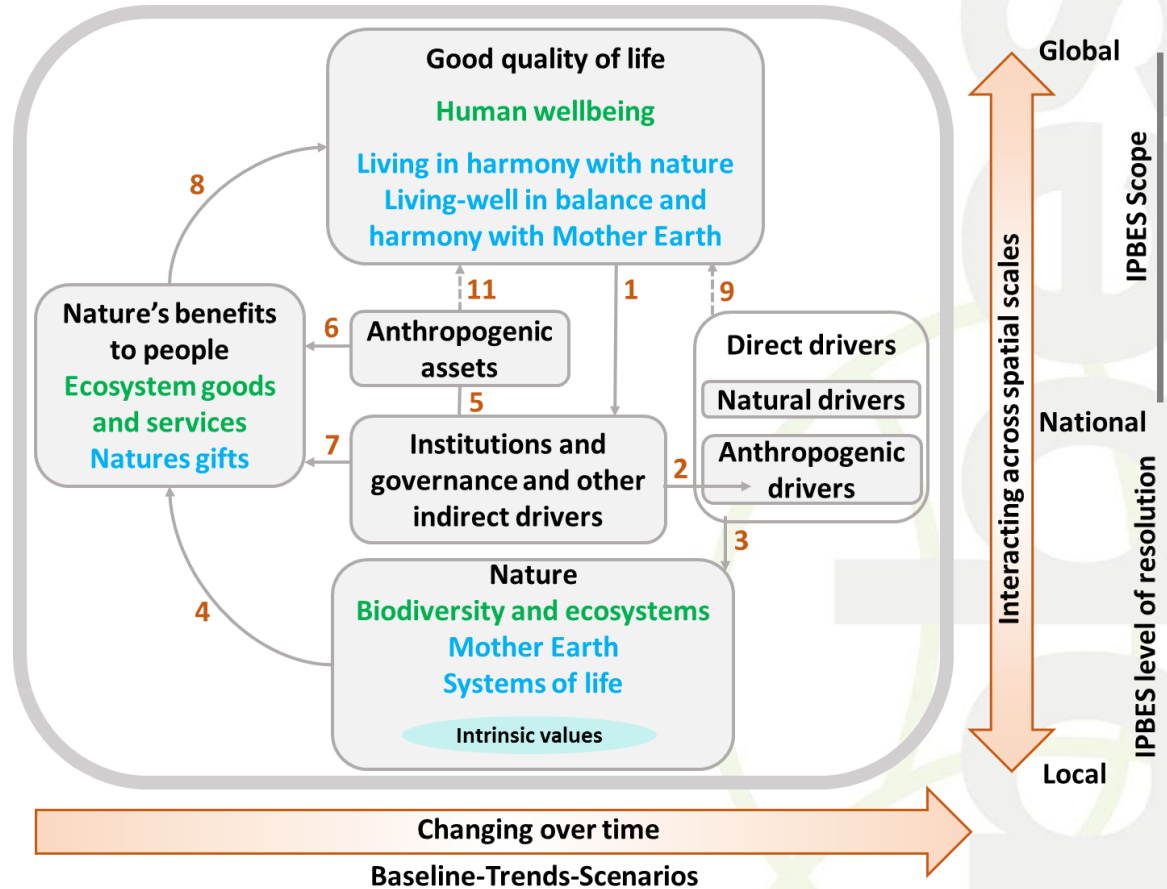
- Policy support tools and methodologies; Communication and stakeholder engagement

## Section VI: Strengthening Capacities

## Glossary

# The conceptual framework

- Chapter 1 in the Guide (see link above);
- Article: [The IPBES Conceptual Framework - connecting nature and people](#) ;
- [E-Learning on the IPBES Conceptual Framework](#) developed by the Sub-Global Assessment Network
- IPBES Webinar Series - webinar 2: The Conceptual Framework, Sandra Diaz 28. April 18:00-19:00 CEST. [Register here.](#)



## IPBES assessments

- 4 different types:
  - *Global assessments* (1<sup>st</sup> initiated to be completed in 2019)
  - *Regional assessments* (for Africa; the Americas; Asia and the Pacific; & Europe and Central Asia in 2017)
  - *Thematic assessments* (Pollinators, Pollination and Food Production in 2016; Land degradation and restoration in 2017)
  - *Methodological assessments* (Scenario analysis and modelling in 2016)
- Standard and fast-track approach to thematic and methodological assessments
- Approach to synthesis reports, technical papers and supportive material
- Support capacity building for carrying out and using national and regional assessments

# IPBES Assessment Stages

## *Requests & exploration*

Requests by members and observers

Consideration by MEP & Bureau

- Draft WP
- Draft scoping reports

Consideration by Plenary

- Approve WP
- Initiate scoping
- Initiate assessment

## *Scoping & design*

Consideration by Plenary

- Initiate scoping

Scoping by MEP, Bureau & experts

- Draft scoping report (rationale, assumptions, utility, data, scale, outline, costs & timeline)

Consideration by Plenary

- Initiate re-scoping, put on hold or reject
- Initiate assessment

## *Implementation*

Expert nominations by members and observers

Expert selection by MEP

- Co-chairs and authors (balance between gender, disciplines & geography)
- Management team

Assessment by experts

- outline, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> draft
- 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> peer review
- Summary for Policy Makers (SPM)

## *Endorsement & outreach*

Validation by MEP/Bureau of report and SPM

Approval of SPM (“line by line”) and acceptance of assessment report by the Plenary

Outreach and support for use

# Who's who in an IPBES assessment?

- **Assessment co-chair**
  - Oversees preparation of the report and ensure that it is completed to a high standard
- **Coordinating Lead Authors (CLAs)**
  - Coordinates major sections and/or chapters and ensures that they are collated, completed to a high standard and conform to overall style for the document
  - Ensures that cross-cutting issues of significance to more than one section are coherently addressed
- **Lead Authors (LAs)**
  - Produce designated sections of parts of chapters
  - Synthesises material drawn from available literature, fully-justified unpublished sources, contributing author's, stakeholders and experts where appropriate
- **Contributing Authors (CAs)**
  - Prepares technical information for inclusion by LAs in relevant section or part of chapter

# Who's who in an IPBES assessment?

## ➤ Review Editors (REs)

- Assist the MEP in identifying reviews for the expert review process
- Ensure that all substantive expert and government reviews are afforded appropriate consideration
- Advise LAs on how to handle contentious or controversial issues
- Ensure that genuine controversies are adequately reflected in the text of the report

## ➤ Expert Reviewers

- Comment on accuracy and completeness of the scientific technical and socio-economic content and overall balance of the drafts

## ➤ Technical Support Unit (TSU)

- Provides technical and administrative support under supervision by the IPBES secretariat

## Early implementation stage

- Preliminary assessment of the focus areas identified in the scoping stage and detailed chapter outline
- Work at this stage can include considerations of:
  - The **status and trends** of priority ecosystem services and associated drivers of change
  - **Scenarios** – development of descriptive story lines to illustrate consequences of changes in drivers, ecosystems and their services, and human well-being
  - **Valuation** of services – present and future; monetary and non-monetary
  - Analysis of **response options**

## Accessing materials

### ➤ Accessing materials

- Communication and coordination within assessments
- Actors within assessments: co-chairs, CLAs and TSU
- Task forces and TSUs on Knowledge & Data and ILK

### ➤ Global datasets

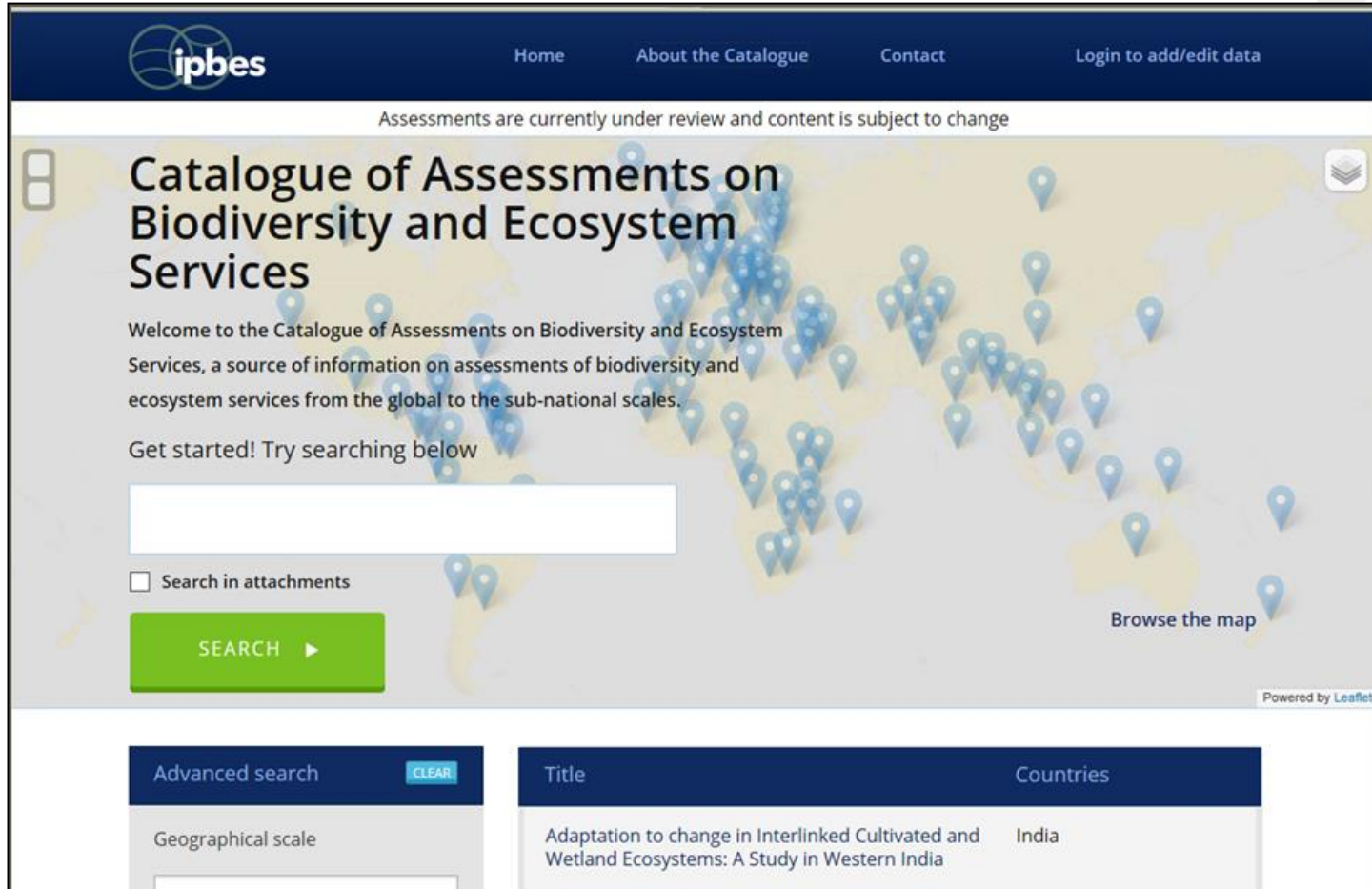
- International organisations, national agencies with international scope, global research institutes etc.

### ➤ Regional and sub-regional datasets

- Governmental ministries and agencies, regionally focused institutes etc.

### ➤ ILK knowledge through engagement, dialogue and collaboration with ILK holders and experts

# The Catalogue on Assessments



The screenshot shows the IPBES Catalogue on Assessments website. The header includes the IPBES logo and navigation links: Home, About the Catalogue, Contact, and Login to add/edit data. A notice states: "Assessments are currently under review and content is subject to change". The main heading is "Catalogue of Assessments on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services". Below this, a welcome message reads: "Welcome to the Catalogue of Assessments on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, a source of information on assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services from the global to the sub-national scales." A search prompt says "Get started! Try searching below" followed by a search input field. There is a checkbox for "Search in attachments" and a green "SEARCH" button with a right-pointing arrow. To the right is a map of the world with numerous blue location pins. A "Browse the map" link is located below the map. At the bottom right of the map area, it says "Powered by Leaflet". Below the map is an "Advanced search" section with a "CLEAR" button. The search results table is partially visible, showing a table with columns for "Title" and "Countries".

Assessments are currently under review and content is subject to change

## Catalogue of Assessments on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

Welcome to the Catalogue of Assessments on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, a source of information on assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services from the global to the sub-national scales.

Get started! Try searching below

Search in attachments

SEARCH ▶

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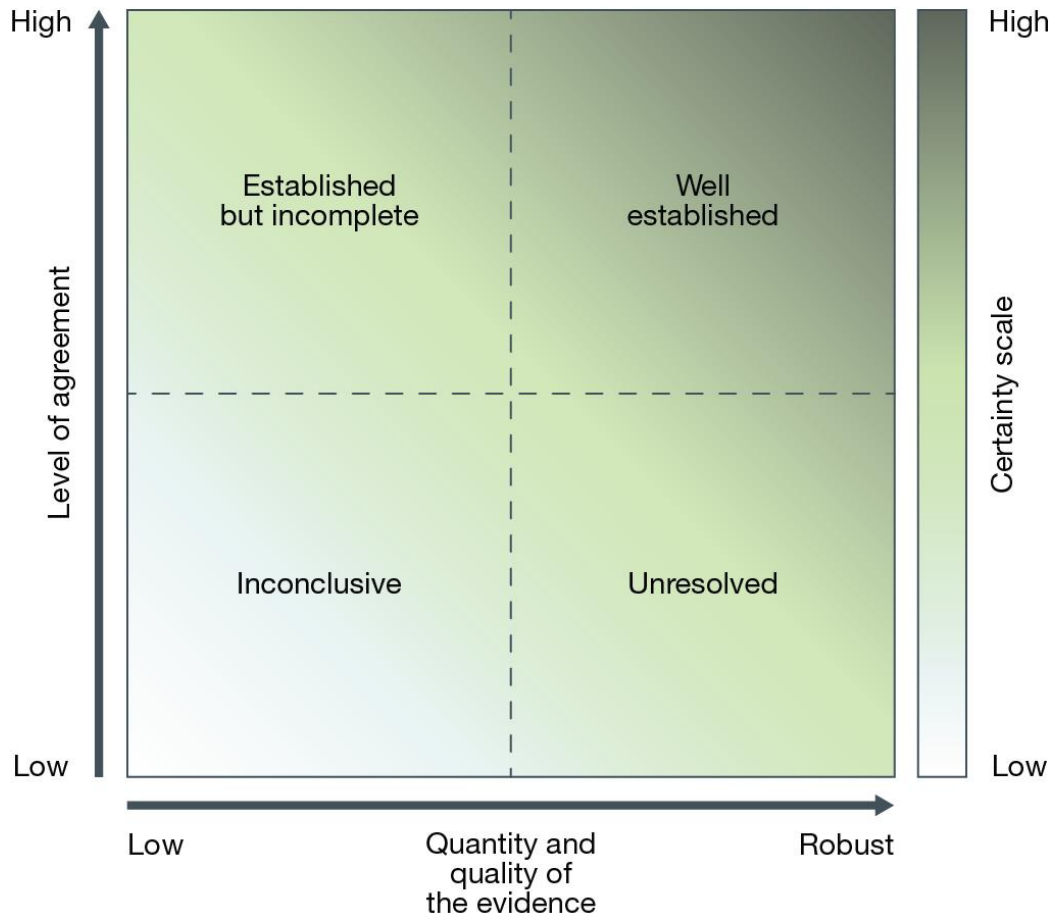
Advanced search	CLEAR	Title	Countries
Geographical scale		Adaptation to change in Interlinked Cultivated and Wetland Ecosystems: A Study in Western India	India

<http://catalog.ipbes.net/>

## Assessments by experts

- Undertake a critical evaluation of the state of knowledge in areas identified by the IPBES Plenary
  - **Not research nor limited to a structured literature review**, but an analysis, synthesis and critical judgment of peer-reviewed literature, grey literature and other knowledge systems such as ILK
  - Quantify the level of confidence in an unbiased way (level of evidence and range of views)
- Present to the IPBES Plenary substantiated policy relevant findings (not policy prescriptive) in a Summary for Policy Makers (SPM)
  - **Not an abstract**, but a synthesis of findings of relevance to the actions required by policy and decision makers
  - Knowledge gaps (not self-serving)
  - Possible actions (if we do x, then knowledge points us to outcome y under z circumstances)

# Use of confidence terms



**Well established:** comprehensive meta-analysis or other synthesis or multiple independent studies that agree.

**Established but incomplete:** general agreement although only a limited number of studies exist; no comprehensive synthesis and/or the studies that exist address the question imprecisely.

**Unresolved:** multiple independent studies exist but conclusions do not agree.

**Inconclusive:** limited evidence, recognizing major knowledge gaps.

**Figure SPM.A2:** The four-box model for the qualitative communication of confidence. Confidence increases towards the top-right corner as suggested by the increasing strength of shading. Source: modified from Moss and Schneider (2000).<sup>[1]</sup>

# Lessons from the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment

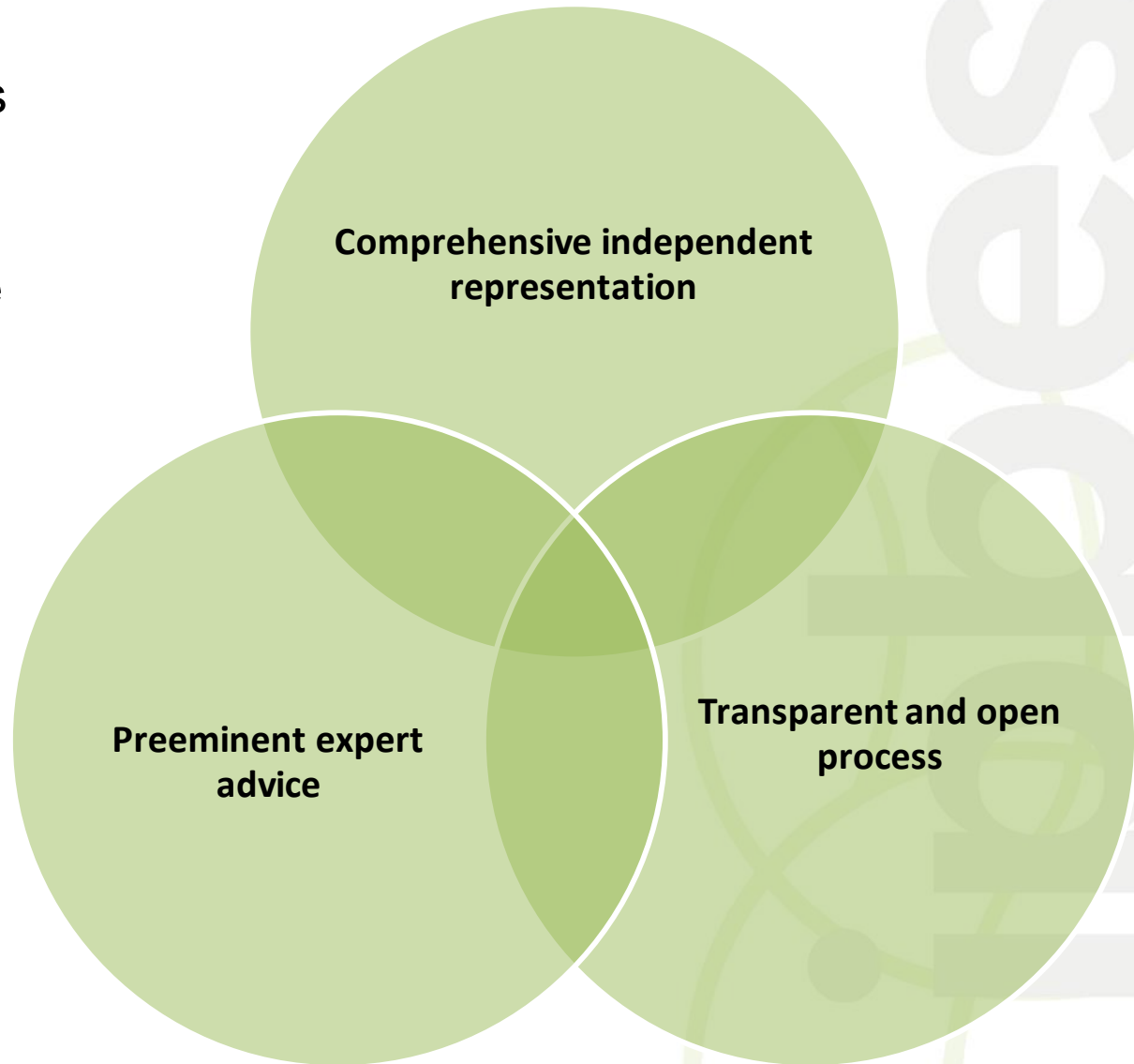
- Discuss problems and actions first
  - Include background information in appendix or references to other sources
- Focus on definable measures and actions and avoid the passive voice
  - Policy professional are likely to ignore statements like “there are reasons to believe some trends can be slowed or even reversed”. If opportunities for reversal exist, state precisely what we believe they are, as best we know.
- Do not use value-laden, flowery, or colloquial language
  - E.g. “sleeping dragon”, “elephant in the room” etc.

## IPBES peer-review process

- Normally consists of three stages
  - Review by experts (first review);
  - Review by Governments and experts(second review);
  - Review by Governments of summaries for policymakers and/or synthesis reports.
- Should include a range of assessment users
- Review process contribute to assessment quality
  - Providing **guidance**
  - Ensuring **robustness**
  - Offering **new perspectives**
  - Augmenting **results**
  - Adding **legitimacy**
  - Creating greater **buy-in** to the findings

## IPBES peer-review process

- 3 key elements
- Review comments made available on Platform website
- Draft Platform reports and author responses to review made available after finalisation of assessment reports



## Handling the review process

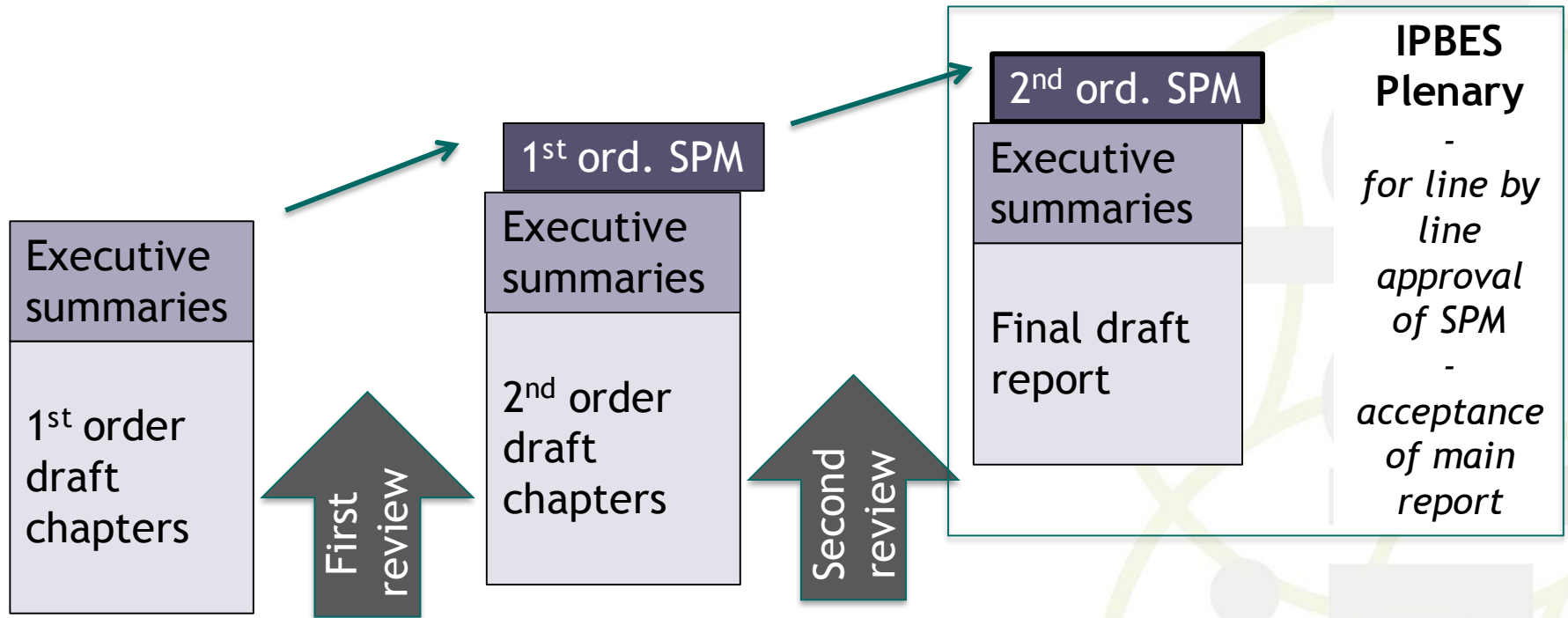
- Lead by CLAs with guidance from REs
- Authors are responsible for dealing with the reviews of their sections
- Responses must be recorded for future reference and consultation with Res
- Controversial issues should be highlighted to the co-chairs
- Use the REs for help and guidance during the review process

## Summary for Policy Makers (SPM)

- What would the storyline and structure (headings) for the macro-story be?
- Present the key findings first in a 2 pager with short succinct key findings (let the facts tells the story)
- Back it up by a more detailed summary which substantiate the key findings (10 pages)
- **Present the main message in bolded first sentence of a paragraph.** Then substantiate, including with facts and figures and examples. Also present the level of confidence (evidence and range of views) where appropriate. Trace statement on findings to the chapters
- Bullets can be used

# Summary for Policy Makers (SPM)

- The development of the SPM is an iterative process which involve going fourth and back between the SPM and the main report



## Ending

- Thank you for your attendance and submitted questions
- You can download this presentation as a PDF under “Handouts” in the webinar interface
- A recording of the webinar will be posted on [www.IPBES.net](http://www.IPBES.net)
- We hope you will take two minutes to complete the survey that pop-up once you exit this webinar
- Information on upcoming webinars will be posted on [www.IPBES.net](http://www.IPBES.net) and circulated via email.
- Next webinar on 28. April 18:00-19:00 on the IPBES Conceptual Framework. Presenter: Sandra Diaz. [Register here.](#)