

IPBES consultation and capacity-building workshop

Bonn, Germany, 4-6 June 2018

Objective 3: consultation on the strategic framework for the future work programme of IPBES

Draft analysis of input received regarding the strategic framework of the future IPBES work programme

In response to the call for input to the questionnaire sent on 26 April 2018, with a deadline of 23 May 2018 (EM/2018/07), the IPBES secretariat has received input from 18 governments, 7 organizations, and 4 individuals or groups of individuals. The input received is made available to participants in full as a compilation.

The present document represents an overview analysis of the input received. It has been prepared by the IPBES secretariat to facilitate the discussions at the IPBES consultation and capacity-building workshop (4-6 June 2018). The structure of this analysis follows that of the questionnaire. The outcome of this consultation will contribute to the revision of the draft strategic framework up to 2030 requested by the Plenary in its decision IPBES-6/2.

1 Strengthening and better integrating the four functions of IPBES

1.1 Assessments

Suggestions for possible topics for future assessments include:

- A special IPCC/IPBES report on biodiversity and climate change.
- A report on modelling the global socio-economic impacts of future changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- A combined assessment on the nexus of food, agriculture, health and biodiversity should be a priority of the second work programme.
- Such a nexus may be too broad in scope.
- A methodological assessment on the metrics to be used in gauging corporate impacts on biodiversity.
- The role and potential of ecosystem-based approaches/nature-based solutions should be included in each assessment.

- The development of scenarios and models:
 - that mechanistically include feedbacks from changes in biodiversity in response to climate change;
 - that extend SSP scenarios (shared socio-economic pathways), developed for climate change, to show impacts on biodiversity, and develop a new set of “nature’s futures” scenarios;
- An assessment on marine biodiversity and ecosystem services; this could include a consideration of coral reefs.
- There could be a focus on the direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity changes
- The next global assessment could start with the global report, followed by regional syntheses, drawn out from the global report (rather than the other way around).
- It is suggested to add more of a focus at the sub-regional level (e.g. Southeast Asia) to increase policy relevance.
- IPBES could assess the impact of climate change.
- Future scoping reports should emphasize shorter term policy questions, rather than longer term and broad questions.
- IPBES could evaluate the overall impact of agriculture, the benefits of applying agro-ecological principles, of intensive agriculture.
- IPBES could evaluate the environmental impact of consumption.

Suggestions regarding processes associated to assessments include:

- IPBES could do fast track assessments again (like it did with pollination or scenarios and models, over two years instead of three). One criteria for choosing to perform a fast track assessment might be the need to focus on relatively narrow issues. On the other hand, it may not be the role of IPBES to react quickly to urgent issues?
- There should be an additional opportunity to review SPM prior to Plenary, since first drafts of SPM change significantly.
- Password protection of drafts of SPM and chapters may represent an obstacle to the peer review process.
- Comments made during the peer review process could be posted on-line, together with the responses given, ahead, rather than after the Plenary approving the assessment, in order to inform everyone on the way comments were handled.
- SPMs should be shorter, with simpler and punchier key messages; a professional science communicator could be engaged to work on the key messages.

Suggestions regarding special reports:

- Specific technical papers could be drawn from the assessments, interpreting their findings for specific audiences; this would increase buy in from a range of stakeholders, from different economic sectors, possibly specific regions or ecosystems, etc.

1.2 Policy support

- The policy function should overall be given more attention and resources.
- The mandate of the expert group on policy support should be clarified.

- IPBES should develop closer ties with the users of its products (assessments, catalogue of policy support tools) in order to be more policy relevant and better address the needs of potential users:
 - More attention should be paid during the scoping process to understanding the needs of the policy fora for which assessments will be delivered, to increase relevance;
 - The policy support function should address the change makers in governments, businesses and organizations.
- Regarding methodological assessments focusing on policy support tools: Some comments supported the idea to perform such an assessment, while it was alternatively proposed to make all assessments more policy-focused rather than stand-alone assessments of policy support tools. Additional suggestions included:
 - It would be good to focus on several policy instruments since no single instrument can solve problems, and many of the traditional instruments are of low efficiency. It is important to assess a spectrum of available instruments, and to provide best practice examples;
 - Promising innovative instruments include civil-public-private-partnerships, climate-public-private partnerships, marketplaces for nature conservation activities, societal partnerships agreement for sustainable development in agriculture;
 - Biodiversity offsets and practical applications could for example be assessed;
 - Each assessment could define a suite of effective policy instruments that policymakers could go to when trying to determine policy options.
- Regarding the catalogue for policy support:
 - The scope and aim of the catalogue should be clarified;
 - Its added value should be specified compared to similar portals;
 - The responsibility for populating the catalogue with information, for validating this information and ensuring quality content, and for maintaining the catalogue on the long term should be clarified;
 - The initial catalogue is promising but it needs to be fully developed;
 - Its core work could focus on the case studies presented in the IPBES assessments, at least as a first step, to make things manageable, with cross references to external resources and case studies, such as the NBSAP forum.

1.3 Capacity-building

- IPBES should continue to implement its capacity-building rolling plan.
- The work on capacity-building should be better targeted:
 - It should directly link with IPBES deliverables (e.g. build capacity on key findings of assessments).
 - It should focus on the needs for capacity of the three other functions of IPBES.
- IPBES should continue to encourage and assist governments to develop capacity at the national level to contribute to the production and the use of IPBES assessments. Suggestions include:

- Continue to build capacity to provide technical review of assessments;
- Support national uptake events;
- Distribute a guide on IPBES targeted at governments to inform staff in ministries and other agencies.
- IPBES could strengthen cross-sectoral capacities (“biodiversity mainstreaming”).
- IPBES should continue to build capacity of all selected experts at the start of each assessment.
- The use of webinars and other IPBES on line resources could be increased.
- More work should take place with partner organizations at regional and sub-regional level. A suggestion could be to convene capacity-building workshops on topics relevant to the regions.
- IPBES could work with the educational system on biodiversity-related cursus. Related suggestions include:
 - Development of teaching material for master programmes;
 - Activities around teacher education (“training of trainers”).
- The capacity-building forum could have more impact if focused on a specific issue.

1.4 Knowledge generation

- Gaps in knowledge should be more systematically identified in assessment processes, and communicated rapidly to funding bodies once the assessment is completed. Related suggestions:
 - Each SPM could include a box with a set of major knowledge gaps;
 - Each assessment could include an annex compiling knowledge gaps, which could be turned into a technical publication, and presented to relevant conferences or research societies.
- The lack of availability of existing documentation on ILK presents a challenge. IPBES is already influencing research agendas, but more needs to be done. IPBES could systematically scope for good examples of ILK research providing useful methodologies and communicate on those to actively stimulate research and initiatives which over time will generate more ILK related knowledge and data for future assessments.
- IPBES should engage better and more closely with research funding agencies. Related suggestions include:
 - A structured participatory process with relevant representatives of funding agencies should be designed, and adequately resourced;
 - A group within IPBES could map biodiversity research funders at all levels (national to global) to help align agendas;
 - IPBES could encourage national focal points to organize exchanges with IPBES experts to better understand and address knowledge gaps.
- IPBES could establish partnerships with data syntheses centers to conduct meta-data analyses and produce data synthesis papers, particularly in areas where gaps have been identified.

- New forms of generation of knowledge (e.g. citizen science) need to be integrated into the work of IPBES.

1.5 Integration of the four functions of IPBES

- A better integration across the four functions is needed, and should be built-in as part of the second work programme. An integrated plan should be developed where activities are appropriately cross-related and where activities are correlated and not independent.
- Every new IPBES assessment could define at its start a list of associated deliverables directly addressing the other three functions. As an example, the assessment of invasive alien species could include in its planning the production of a training manual for custom officers to build capacity, and a meeting with key research groups working on invasive alien species to foster the generation of new knowledge on identified gaps.
- Each assessment report could include additional chapters dedicated to the three other functions.
- All assessments should provide policy options, identify knowledge gaps and build capacity. One suggestion could be to have in the scoping report clearly laid out sections on how the four functions are addressed for that assessment.
- Experts selected for assessments could be more diverse and include those with policy and capacity-building knowledge as well as scientific expertise.

1.6 How to keep the second work programme “rolling”?

- Several calls for requests could be made during the 2nd work programme, rather than defining all topics at the beginning. Related suggestions include:
 - Have a new call every 3 years;
 - Select only 2 to 3 topics from each call;
- To keep flexibility, the Plenary should have the option to not go ahead with an assessment, even if a scoping report has been approved; or to postpone it if it identifies a higher priority issue.
- No more than 3 assessments should be performed in parallel.
- No more than 2 assessments should be presented per Plenary.
- New topics might be added once the post-2020 global biodiversity framework is approved.
- The calls for new topics should be advertised well ahead of time to link with timetables of major intergovernmental meetings.

2 Strengthening institutional arrangements

2.1 Plenary sessions

- Frequency of Plenary meetings:
 - Some comments supported keeping one meeting per year, arguing that many Governments can make annual financial pledges only; and that it is better to maintain continuity.
 - Others supported an 18 months-frequency: this would allow more time for preparation; would save on costs; would give more time to dedicate to the work programme; would align well with the 3 year-terms of Bureau and MEP;

- There was a suggestion for a frequency of 2 years: CBD COPs, for example, meet every 2 years.
- Other proposed a more flexible approach, where the frequency would depend on the need for the Plenary to meet.

2.2 Engagement of policy makers and practitioners

- Comments to this section can also be found in other sections above (e.g. 1.2).
- Policymakers are already engaged in IPBES.
- Greater involvement could be achieved:
 - by targeted presentations to policymakers of SPMs key findings;
 - by using regional and national workshops to increase understanding of IPBES
 - providing alumni with tools and knowledge to help in this regard

2.3 Expert groups and task forces

- All expert groups/task forces maintained into the second work programme should revisit their composition, and partially renew their membership (at least 75%).
- There are several suggestions for topics that task forces could focus upon:
 - Socio-economic indicators;
 - Scenarios and models;
 - Biodiversity mainstreaming;
 - A combined task force for three functions: capacity-building, knowledge generation catalysis, and policy support tools; the objective would be to promote integration;
 - A task force on exploring how IPBES results can be implemented in conventions and at national level;
 - Ecosystem resilience/climate change, pollution and other anthropic activities;
- No new task force should be initiated now, and focus should be placed instead on integrating these elements into the assessments.
- Task forces could be reconstituted to include representatives of partner organisations to support delivery of particular aspects, rather than individual experts.
- Expert groups should be established for specific issues where advice is needed.
- The need for current task forces should be examined.

2.4 Indigenous and local knowledge

- Continue a task force on ILK, but ensure that there is no overlap with the work on article 8j of CBD.
- Members should be consulted on IPLCs in their countries to provide feedback and ensure that the work of IPBES is inclusive and reaches out to a full diversity of actors.
- Some focus could be placed on methods to integrate work on case studies related to ILK across scales, so that the significance of case studies is recognised at the appropriate scale.
- Efforts should be continued to bring in ILK holders and ILK experts into assessments.
- A methodological assessment on ILK is suggested to assess projects that have successfully integrated ILK into national and international projects.
- Thoughts could be given to how ILK is addressed across the four functions.

2.5 Engagement with partners

- There is a need for IPBES to step up efforts to partner with a wider range of MEAs and UN agencies, as well as to intensify existing collaboration. Some specific suggestions were:
 - Increase engagement and better use of relative strengths with existing UN partners, but also engage more widely with the rest of the UN system;
 - Joint side events, workshops webinars etc. – to create ‘space’ for the showcasing of IPBES work even when biodiversity may not be the central theme of a given event;
 - Ensure sufficient information exchange, especially on concurrent assessments, to avoid competition and ensure coherence – also by allowing more opportunities for partner experts to engage with IPBES assessment teams during the assessment process; and
 - Systematically negotiate additional MoUs and technical partnerships –with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. A gap analysis may be useful in this regard.
- IPBES should also formalise and strengthen other kinds of partnerships – this would also require creating common ‘spaces’ for collaboration, better networking and intensified stakeholder engagement. All partners should be clear on their opportunities to engage with IPBES across the work programme.

2.6 Communication and outreach

- More should be done to equip National Focal Points to promote the work of IPBES. Specific proposals ranged from setting up online NFP information sharing groups to the creation of a toolkit for NFPs to present IPBES and its outputs.
- The IPBES website could still be much-improved, including by creating a better structure, using more languages, improving donor recognition and adding tools for those working on IPBES deliverables.
- Although much-improved, more can still be done to support two-way communications between IPBES and its partners on issues of the shared BES agenda. Some specific suggestions were to focus on more audio-visual materials, create shorter targeted outputs from the assessments, infographics etc.
- Communications and outreach should also promote IPBES activities and deliverables beyond assessments.
- Social media should continue to be used as a main medium for communication and outreach.
- A 3rd-party ambassador/VIP champion programme could be considered.

2.7 Mobilisation of resources for IPBES

- Make progress towards agreement on sustainable budgets, by providing various budget scenarios.
- Consider crowdfunding as a way to raise funds.
- Institutes payment of dues.
- Request each IPBES member to make a minimum contribution.
- Provide recognition to donors of cash and in-kind contributions (section on IPBES web site).
- Foster participation of the private sector, avoiding earmarked contributions.
- Strengthen the fund-raising unit.
- Promote decentralization of IPBES work, including TSUs to diversify forms of support.
- Governments could develop joint applications focused on identified policy priorities.
- Set up a contingency fund and pay into it every year.

- Explore philanthropy.