

## Report - #IPBES7 Stakeholder Day

Drafted by Young Ecosystem Services Specialists (YESS) for the Open-Ended Network of IPBES Stakeholders (ONet)

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## **Introduction**

From 29th April to 4th May 2019, the 7th Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) took place in Paris, hosted by the Headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

This Plenary has seen the finalization of the Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, in addition to the definition of the next Work Programme.

On 28th April, 2019, UNESCO Headquarters hosted the #IPBES7 Stakeholder Day, organized by the Stakeholder-Day project team. This team comprises representatives of the Open-Ended Network of IPBES Stakeholders (ONet), formally launched in December 2018, of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IIFBES) and of IPBES Secretariat. This event has attracted more than 500 registrants, including decision makers, experts, and other stakeholders.

One main result of this Stakeholder Day has been the finalization of a Stakeholders' Opening Statement giving voice to all stakeholders present at Stakeholder Day.

### ***ONet***

ONet is a self-organised network recognised as part of the IPBES process, as per the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy adopted in 2015. Its objective is to strengthen the role of Stakeholders in IPBES by:

- Fostering a two-way communication between stakeholders and IPBES,
- Disseminating IPBES outputs and give it a wide audience to implement the assessment,
- Reaching out to diverse stakeholders in various regions and disciplines to increase the relevance and efficiency of IPBES.

ONet has a fundamental role within IPBES, recognizing the importance of stakeholder involvement in IPBES for its credibility and relevance. Stakeholder involvement is essential for including an effective bottom up process regarding the four functions of IPBES.

### ***IIFBES***

The International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IIFBES) is a self-organised network. recognized as part of the IPBES process . IIFBES represents the involvement of indigenous and local communities in IPBES gathering local communities spread all around the world and making their voice heard, facilitating the recognition of local knowledge.





## **Welcome Remarks**

Shamila Nair-Bedouelle, newly appointed Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences at UNESCO, welcomed all participants to the #IPBES7 Stakeholder Day, by stressing the relevance of UNESCO as a partner to IPBES, seeing the importance of the nexus between biodiversity, health and culture. She highlighted the important role played by local communities, education professionals, and the youth in preserving biodiversity and fulfilling the goal of the platform.

Her welcome remarks were followed by an introductory session that specifically targeted recent participants to IPBES processes. The presentations were made by ONet and IIFBES members. An introduction to the role of ONet was provided by Maylis Desrousseaux. This presentation opened the floor to a short introduction on IPBES' processes and procedures, given by Malte Timpte, and on the rationale for Stakeholder participation within IPBES from Adriana Flores. Joji Carino presented the involvement of indigenous and local communities represented by IIFBES in IPBES.

## **Introduction to Schedule and Priorities of IPBES7**

The schedule for this IPBES Plenary was presented by IPBES Executive Secretary Anne Larigauderie. The main objectives of the IPBES-7 Plenary was the finalization of the Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, in addition to the definition of the Second Work Programme.

As also stressed by the Chair Robert Watson, stakeholders are responsible for taking the outputs to policy makers and the public, to help them understand that the deterioration of nature is not only an environmental issue, but also an economic, social, ethical one. In addition, dealing with climate change and biodiversity is fundamental not only for the sake of the environment itself, but especially for the achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Agenda. It must be acknowledged that most of the Sustainable Development Goals cannot be achieved without actions in this direction. In this regard, Chair Robert Watson also remarked the importance of youth engagement in dealing with these issues.

## **Global Assessment**

As introduced in previous sections, one of the main objective of the 7th IPBES Plenary was the finalization of the Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. Introduced by Sandra Diaz, the schedule for the global assessment was foreseen to be very tight, because of the amount of comments received. The rate of discussions for the plenary to come to a consensus at the end of the week is approximately 20 minutes per paragraph. Purpose of the review is to make IPBES work even more policy relevant, and to incorporate policy expertise: government, experts in policy, NGOs, public at large.

During the Stakeholder Day, participants were asked about their engagement with the Global Assessment. Although many of the responders (90 responders) have not been involved at all, many others have either contributed to chapters or contributed as reviewers. When asked whether they are aware of the contents of the Global Assessment, it resulted that the 67% of participants who responded (91 responders) have read the IPBES Global Assessment Summary for Policy-Makers, whereas 33% hadn't read it (yet).

Along with the presentation of the three new assessments, a particular highlight on two points must be done:

- the importance of getting the private sector on board. They are also affected by biodiversity loss, they must be part of the solution.
- the importance of a nexus assessment explaining how climate change and biodiversity interact, as well as the impact on health and security (water, food).









## **Stakeholders' activities in support of IPBES: National platforms, networks and organisations**

Existing activities in support of IPBES giving voices to stakeholders was called on stage to present their work and outreach.

### ***French Foundation for Biodiversity Research***

The French Foundation for Biodiversity Research aims to better link science and society. It is organized with a scientific council and a committee of strategic orientation (CSO) gathering a total of 240 stakeholders. It is linked with Oree and the EPE (Private Sector Federations), which is working on the Act4Nature pledge (see below). It also contributes with a club research-action, to foster concrete action on biodiversity.

Its engagement with IPBES consists of hosting the secretariat of the French Committee of IPBES. Although it is independent from IPBES, its aim is to facilitate the involvement of the CSO with IPBES, for example through dissemination of the assessments. Currently working on biodiversity indicators, the ambition is to come up with a small number of integrated indicators. The plurality of scientific approaches is a challenge to reaching consensus on relevant indicators.

### ***Act4Nature Pledge***

The Act4Nature Pledge, is a pledge of “business for biodiversity”, generated to respond to the increased concerns of the public, and to overcome business risk of biodiversity loss and negative impacts. This initiative was launched in Europe (France) in 2017 with the participation and support of the CSO of the French Foundation for Biodiversity Research. It aims to reach out to new companies and to increase its scope at the international level.

### ***Regional and National IPBES Networks***

There are many regional and national networks committed to locally implement IPBES assessments. Some examples are the ECA Network, or the Brazilian Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.

### ***National Platforms: Cameroon's Experience***

States are more and more engaged to downscale IPBES process to the national level through national assessments, explains Claire Brown from UNEP-WCMC. The process of developing national assessments foresees commitments on capacity building, leading to the creation of National Platforms, as it can already be seen for States as Cameroon, Ethiopia and Vietnam.

The National Platform for Cameroon was created in 2017, reflecting the political engagement of the State in international conventions. Besides its support to the implementation of the biodiversity national plan, it plays a fundamental role in the national assessment. The national assessment was commissioned to an NGO, to ensure interdependence. Within this framework, the National Platform served as a consultative body, ensuring that all stakeholders are included and taken into consideration.

Although there is no formal link between the National Platform and IPBES, the IPBES National Focal Point seats at the National Platform Committee. The involvement of the IPBES focal point in the

national platform is important to ensure IPBES recommendations are taken into account. Nevertheless, more formal relationship with IPBES would be useful to reinforce capacity building

## **What's next for IPBES: Improving engagement in the second work programme**

Taking part to the panel for this session were:

- Anne Larigauderie from the IPBES Executive Secretary
- Sunandan Tiwari from the ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability)
- Claire Tutenuit from ActForNature
- Hilde Eggermont from Europe and Central Asia IPBES Network
- Peter Bridgewater from the IPBES Review Panel
- Florence Daguitan from the Indigenous and Local Knowledge / Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (ILK/IPLC )

The panelists proposed the following suggestions to improve stakeholder engagements during the second work programme of the Platform:

ICLEI focused on the challenge of making (business) case for cities, to invest in Nature-Based Solutions (NBS). Reorientation about how we think about profit is therefore encouraged, may it be for example by investing in nature for nature itself. There should be attempts to use IPBES outputs in cities, for raising awareness. For this purpose, there should be tangible maps, and other easy indicators that people can use to see how they progress. So far, 50 cities signed up for the Cities with Nature initiative.

Engagement of cities with researchers and local / indigenous knowledge is critical, as much as developing skills to translate science into policy, so-called “knowledge brokers”. It is role of IPBES to improve learning process from research to policy, along with bringing credibility and trust. Current challenges are represented by lack of incentives for scientists to be engaged in science-policy interface, which IPBES could provide. For a better uptake of IPBES deliverables, policy makers at subnational levels, such as local governments or private companies, need summary of a summary, or focusing on specific storytelling.

The IPBES Review Panel, regarding Stakeholder engagement, commented that science-policy interface is integral and specific to IPBES. Therefore, change will not be enacted by assessments alone, and a more strategic involvement with Stakeholders is needed. As scientific assessment won't make the change, IPBES needs also to strengthen the policy aspect of its work. IPBES needs to develop a collaborative approach to engage more stakeholders an adequate financial help, enthusiasm of stakeholders group. Budget has been a continuously issue. How to reach sustainable financial position? How to integrate all knowledges? How to improve conversation with stakeholders of all kinds? How to better engage national focus points? These points shall be strengthened for the future.

Participants have been asked to share issues they consider to be important in the Second Work Programme. They highlighted the pressing need for the assessmen on transformative changes and on the interlinkages between climate change and biodiversity.



## Feedback

Finally, participants seem to have particularly enjoyed the interactive session with Mentimeters, where their inputs and opinions have been collected



Fig. 8: Participants' level of appreciation of the sessions (Mentimeter, 55 responders)

## Networking Lunch organized by the YESS Network

As member of the ONet, the Young Ecosystem Services Specialists (YESS) Delegation to IPBES organized a networking lunch, with the support of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Swiss Biodiversity Forum. In coherence with the results of the Mentimeter survey, there is a large number of participants interested in making best use of the IPBES Plenary as an opportunity to network.

With a participation of 100 stakeholders, the participants were divided into six categories: early-career researchers, policymakers and others (e.g., NGO, business), and senior researchers, policymakers and others. Each table, which included one representative for each category and a moderator from the YESS Delegation, engaged in discussions on their expectations and wishes for the future of IPBES. Resulting from the lunch were the need for raising awareness and educating the public, along with engaging with the private sector, widely identified as one of the key solutions to fulfil the work programme. Stakeholders have highlighted their wish for local and national capacities to be strengthened, by involving local actors and bridging gaps.

As for future IPBES assessments, researchers and policymakers encouraged the platform to engage more with “social sciences”. The group of other stakeholders asked for more “action”, “policy implementation”, “more concrete recommendation” and more “concrete and implementable actions” as well as “concrete targets and solution for each actor.” With the purpose of giving the opportunity to stakeholders to make their voice heard, and interact with participants with different roles within IPBES, this lunch has resulted into an enriching and successful event.



*Fig. 9: Participants at the Networking Lunch were divided in different tables, where conversations were facilitated by a YESS moderator*

## **Organization of stakeholder's work throughout the week including the finalization of the opening statement (facilitated by Onet)**

Stakeholders present at IPBES-7 were invited to join daily consultation meetings to discuss interventions on specific agenda items, how to proceed and the content of the closing statement.

ONet members were invited to propose content via an online survey one month before IPBES-7. The inputs were presented at the Onet Caucus Day one day prior IPBES-7 and additional proposals were collected. The full list of proposals was presented in plenary for consideration of the stakeholder day participants. The audience was invited to provide further ideas and inputs, which were collected in a public document.

The Opening Statement was finalised in two steps:

- Participants were invited to add elements to the draft list of items for the statement
- Participants were prompted to provide their preferences on the draft items thanks to a live Mentimeter survey

The statement recognized the important role played by local communities, education professionals and the youth in preserving biodiversity and fulfil the goal of the platform, acknowledging an increased level of awareness.

### **External Links**

#IPBES7 Stakeholder Day Agenda

[https://www.ipbes.net/sites/default/files/downloads/stakeholder\\_day\\_agenda\\_28\\_april\\_2019\\_ipbes\\_7\\_final.pdf](https://www.ipbes.net/sites/default/files/downloads/stakeholder_day_agenda_28_april_2019_ipbes_7_final.pdf)

Link to the collected inputs: <http://tiny.cc/StakeholderStatementIPBES>

Link to the inputs from the audience:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OL9X6hKlt35BTl6xD0kS4APM\\_i4Urikd/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OL9X6hKlt35BTl6xD0kS4APM_i4Urikd/view?usp=sharing)

Link to the Mentimeter survey on preferences: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1TaAWs2jfRbx-BgUt2ZKo-OjZav-bcINI>

Link to the Opening Statement:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1T3dN6MLweabfo7doWPzIQVOEHrXb0Rjw/view?usp=sharing>

Link to the results of the YESS Networking Lunch: <https://medium.com/naturewords/a-bigger-impact-to-save-wildlife-760e84b3de49>

For information, ONet, on behalf of the Stakeholder present in IPBES-7, also drafted a closing statement that was read during the concluding session of the Plenary.

Link to the Closing Statement:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4iniV3g3L\\_DZnVVYm4xZW81bVpGNjBQdm8tNjhCLWltbzJj/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4iniV3g3L_DZnVVYm4xZW81bVpGNjBQdm8tNjhCLWltbzJj/view?usp=sharing)