

## SUMMARY OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE PLENARY MEETING ON THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL SCIENCE-POLICY PLATFORM ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES: 3-7 OCTOBER 2011

The first session of the plenary meeting on the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) met from 3-7 October 2011 at the UN Environment Programme's (UNEP) headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. The meeting was attended by 366 delegates representing 112 countries, two observers, five intergovernmental organizations, 33 non-governmental organizations, three conventions and ten UN bodies and specialized agencies. Over the five-day meeting, delegates considered the modalities and institutional arrangements for an IPBES, including: the functions and operating principles of the platform; the legal issues relating to the establishment and operationalization of the platform; the work programme of the platform; and the criteria for selecting host institutions and the physical location of the secretariat.

Delegates adopted the report of the meeting and its annexes, which detail the week's proceedings and contain draft text on the: functions and operating principles of the platform; functions and structures of bodies that may be established under the platform; rules of procedure for meetings under the platform; process and criteria for selecting the host institution and physical location of the secretariat; and the work programme of the platform. Discussions on these texts will resume at the second session of the plenary meeting, tentatively scheduled for April 2012.

There was general agreement among delegates on the need to operationalize the platform as soon as possible. There was, however, some confusion as to the legal status of the platform and whether the UN General Assembly (UNGA) had established the body or not. That being said, the key achievements of the week were reaching agreement on the process and criteria for selecting host institutions and the physical location of the secretariat for the platform and intersessional work on, *inter alia*, the platform's bidding process, rules of procedure and work programme.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF IPBES AND RELATED PROCESSES

The initiative to hold consultations regarding the establishment of an IPBES emerged from the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) follow-up process, and the outcomes of the International Mechanism of Scientific Expertise on Biodiversity (IMoSEB) process.

**MILLENNIUM ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT:** From 2001 to 2005 the MA assessed the consequences of ecosystem change for human well-being, involving the work of more than 1,360 experts worldwide. Published in 2005, the MA outcomes provide the first state-of-the-art scientific appraisal of the condition and trends in the world's ecosystems and the services they provide, as well as the scientific basis for action to conserve and use them sustainably. In 2006, the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP) (March 2006, Curitiba, Brazil) adopted a decision on the MA's implications for the work of the CBD, in which it encourages parties, *inter alia*, to use the MA framework for sub-global and national assessments. In 2007, UNEP conducted an evaluation of the MA and initiated the MA follow-up process.

**IMOSEB PROCESS:** The proposal for a Consultative Process Towards an IMoSEB was initiated at the Paris

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Conference on Biodiversity, Science and Governance, held in January 2005 (see <http://www.iisd.ca/sd/icb/>). The proposal received political support from Jacques Chirac, President of the French Republic at the time, and the French government. A consultative process was launched, with an International Steering Committee, an Executive Committee and an Executive Secretariat entrusted to the Institut Français de la Biodiversité, which was established to support and facilitate discussions.

The International Steering Committee met for the first time in Paris, France, in February 2006. Participants concurred that the current system for linking science and policy in the area of biodiversity needed further improvement. A number of case studies were developed in 2006, while the idea for an IMoSEB was discussed at a number of events, including at CBD COP 8, and a workshop on “International Science-Policy Interfaces for Biodiversity Governance” (October 2006, Leipzig, Germany).

At the second meeting of the International Steering Committee, in December 2006, the Executive Committee reported on the results of the case studies and identified a series of “needs and options.” A document outlining key ideas, entitled “International Steering Committee Members’ Responses: ‘Needs and Options’ Document,” was prepared by the Executive Secretariat and distributed in January 2007. The document was designed to assist participants during a series of regional consultations. Six regional consultations were held between January 2007 and May 2008.

The final meeting of the IMoSEB International Steering Committee was held from 15-17 November 2007, in Montpellier, France. The meeting reviewed the outcomes of the regional consultations and further discussed the needs and options for an IMoSEB, as well as how to improve the science-policy interface for biodiversity at all levels. In its final statement, while not recommending the formation of a new institution, the International Steering Committee agreed to invite donors and governments to provide support for the further and urgent consideration of the establishment of a science-policy interface. It further invited the Executive Director of UNEP and others to convene a meeting to consider establishing such an interface.

**IPBES CONCEPT:** In response to the IMoSEB outcome, UNEP decided to convene the *Ad Hoc* Intergovernmental and Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on an IPBES. The Government of France, in close consultation with experts in their personal capacity, drafted a concept note on the rationale, core mandate, expected outcomes, focus areas and operational modalities of a possible IPBES, which was made available for peer review and was subsequently revised.

The IMoSEB outcome and the IPBES concept note were also considered by CBD COP 9 (May 2008, Bonn, Germany). In Decision IX/15 (follow-up to the MA), the COP welcomed the decision of the UNEP Executive Director to convene the *Ad Hoc* Intergovernmental and Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on an IPBES, and requested the CBD *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention to consider the outcomes at its third meeting to be held in May 2010.

**IPBES-I:** The first *Ad Hoc* Intergovernmental and Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on an IPBES was held from 10-12 November 2008 in Putrajaya, Malaysia. Participants adopted a Chair’s summary, which recommended that the UNEP Executive Director report the meeting’s outcomes to the UNEP Governing Council (GC-25) and to convene a second meeting. The Summary contained two additional recommendations: to

continue exploring mechanisms to improve the science-policy interface on biodiversity and ecosystem services for human well-being and sustainable development; and that UNEP undertake a preliminary gap analysis to facilitate the discussions, to be made available to the UNEP GC.

**UNEP GC-25/GMEF:** The 25th meeting of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC-25/GMEF), which met from 16-20 February 2009, in Nairobi, Kenya, adopted Decision 25/10 calling for UNEP to undertake a further process to explore ways and means to strengthen the science-policy interface on biodiversity. In response to the decision, UNEP invited governments and organizations to participate in an open peer review of the preliminary gap analysis on existing interfaces on biodiversity and ecosystem services. These comments were incorporated in the final gap analysis.

**IPBES-II:** At this meeting, held from 5-9 October 2009, in Nairobi, Kenya, participants exchanged views on the major findings of the gap analysis, options to strengthen the science-policy interface, functions of an IPBES and possible governance structures. Participants adopted a Chair’s Summary of Outcomes and Discussions, which highlighted areas of agreement and reflected the differing views expressed during the meeting. Most delegates expressed support for a new mechanism that carries out assessments and to generate and disseminate policy-relevant advice, and emphasized the importance of capacity building and equitable participation from developing countries.

**UNEP GCSS-11/GMEF:** The 11th Special Session of the UNEP Governing Council/GMEF at its meeting held from 22-24 February 2010 in Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia, adopted a decision calling on UNEP to organize a final IPBES meeting.

**IPBES-III:** At this meeting, held from 7-11 June 2010, in Busan, Republic of Korea, delegates discussed whether to establish an IPBES and negotiated text on considerations for the platform’s functions, guiding principles and recommendations. They adopted the Busan Outcome, agreeing that an IPBES should be established, calling for collaboration with existing initiatives on biodiversity and ecosystem services, and be scientifically independent. It was also agreed that the UN General Assembly (UNGA) be invited to consider the conclusions of the meeting and take appropriate action for establishing an IPBES.

**UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY:** The UNGA in Resolution 65/162 requested UNEP to fully operationalize the platform and convene a plenary meeting to determine the modalities and institutional arrangements for the platform at the earliest opportunity.

**UNEP GC-26/GMEF:** This meeting, held from 21-24 February 2011, in Nairobi, Kenya, adopted Decision 26/4, which endorsed the outcome of IPBES-III and called for convening a plenary session for IPBES to determine the modalities and institutional arrangements of the platform.

## REPORT OF THE MEETING

Opening the first session of the plenary meeting on an Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) on Monday morning, Fatoumata Keita, UN Environment Programme (UNEP), called for delegates to observe a minute of silence for Wangari Maathai, Nobel Peace Prize laureate. Achim Steiner, Executive Director, UNEP, described IPBES as an effort to bridge the distance between where science “speaks” and policy is enacted.

Welcoming delegates to Nairobi, Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka, Vice President, Kenya, called on delegates to make IPBES fully operational at this meeting, highlighting the need for effective governance and better science-policy cooperation for biodiversity protection.

During their opening statements, delegates generally supported the swift operationalization and establishment of IPBES. Some delegates, however, urged that IPBES be first established before decisions on the institutional structure are taken. They recognized that the meeting provides a solid foundation for establishing IPBES, with some delegates highlighting the need for IPBES to focus on capacity building, technology development and technology. Others noted that IPBES can improve the use of science in policy making. Some delegates noted that the procedural, institutional and administrative arrangements should allow fulfillment of IPBES' role and functions by engaging all countries. They noted that a common understanding and a quick agreement on modalities is necessary for the platform to be established.

Delegates emphasized that IPBES must: maintain scientific independence and cooperate with Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs); focus on enhancing synergies between relevant organizations; ensure that efforts do not duplicate existing initiatives; and clearly distinguish between knowledge generation and assessment. They further called for IPBES to be small with a simple bureaucracy.

One non-governmental organization (NGO) proposed that IPBES respond to requests from regional, scientific and civil society organizations (CSOs). Others asked that governments provide the platform with clear operational modalities and a strong programme of work and urged that the output of IPBES be policy-relevant but not policy-prescriptive. They said key principles in the design of the platform should be saliency, independence and scientific credibility.

The UN agencies and MEA representatives present said: IPBES should be responsive to CBD needs; that CBD's Strategic Plan for 2011-2020 provides a useful reference framework for the IPBES work programme; and that there is a need for development organizations to engage in biodiversity protection. They also described the science-policy interfaces within Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora's (CITES) processes for consideration by IPBES. The UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) offered to co-host the secretariat.

Delegates then elected Robert Watson, UK, as chair of the session by acclamation. Chair Watson called for the modalities of IPBES to be established as a matter of urgency while "getting them correct." He highlighted that governments, the scientific community and NGOs showed willingness to support the process and endorse all four functions of the platform, namely: identifying and prioritizing key scientific information for policy makers; performing regular and timely assessments of knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services; supporting policy formulation and implementation; and prioritizing key capacity-building needs.

#### **ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS**

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS:** On Monday, in addition to Robert Watson (UK) as Chair, delegates elected Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias (Brazil), Ali Mohamed (Kenya), and Senka

Barudanovich (Bosnia and Herzegovina) as Vice-Chairs. On Tuesday, Yeon-chul Yoo (Republic of Korea) was also elected as vice-chair.

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:** On Monday, Neville Ash, UNEP Secretariat, presented an overview of the steps taken to reach the first session of the plenary meeting on an IPBES, including the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) and the International Mechanism of Scientific Expertise on Biodiversity (IMoSEB), leading to the request for UNEP to convene a meeting to discuss methods to strengthen science-policy interfaces. He also noted the UNEP Governing Council (GC) decision to convene the plenary meeting.

Many delegates called for postponing discussion on legal issues relating to the establishment and operationalization of the platform until the legal advice from the UN Office of Legal Affairs was made available. Delegates agreed to this amendment and adopted the agenda.

**ORGANIZATION OF WORK:** Delegates agreed to hold the sessions in plenary throughout the duration of the meeting with the possible formation of Friends of the Chair groups.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF MODALITIES AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR AN IPBES**

##### **LEGAL ISSUES RELATING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PLATFORM:**

On Wednesday, the UNEP Secretariat introduced three documents (UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/2, UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/INF./9, UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/CRP.2), discussing the legal issues relating to the establishment of the platform. He highlighted the three questions addressed to the legal counsel: is there any legal impediment in the options presented for establishing IPBES; did UN General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 65/162 establish IPBES; and is it possible to operationalize IPBES without establishing it?

He noted that the legal advice of the UN Office of Legal Affairs considered that the UNGA Resolution did not establish IPBES, that no UN body currently has a mandate to establish IPBES or transform itself into IPBES and that no legal impediment exists for governments to establish the body once the scope of the mandate has been defined.

Delegates addressed the legal issues on Thursday in plenary. Some delegates said that the IPBES has already been established and that sovereign states should not be held back by the legal opinions of the UN legal counsel. They thus looked forward to having IPBES established in accordance with appropriate procedures, such as under a UNGA resolution and noted appropriate steps to resolve this matter at the second session of the plenary meeting and establishing IPBES within the UN system.

Other delegates supported establishing IPBES as soon as possible by a resolution of the IPBES plenary declaring that the platform is established and that the current plenary is transformed into the first plenary meeting of the platform. Other countries, however, favored establishing IPBES as an independent intergovernmental body with a possible, but not compulsory, endorsement by the UNGA.

Delegates noted that UNEP convening the plenary might prejudice decisions on the final structure and its independence from the institution or institutions that will provide secretariat services; and that governments had the sovereign right to interpret the legal documents and decide on the way forward.

The UNEP legal counsel said that transformation of intergovernmental organizations outside the UN into UN bodies was possible.

**Final Outcome:** The draft report of the first session of the plenary meeting (UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/L.1) describes the deliberations on legal issues, including the circulation of legal advice from the UN Office of Legal Affairs (UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/INF/14, UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/CRP.2), and a supplementary legal opinion of the UNEP Secretariat (UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/INF/9). It states that delegates highlighted the urgency of operationalizing the platform but notes divergence on the platform's status, describing delegates' different perspectives and opinions. This issue will be considered again at the second session of the plenary in 2012.

**FUNCTIONS AND OPERATING PRINCIPLES OF THE PLATFORM:** On Monday, the Secretariat introduced document UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/3, which sets out the platform's functions and principles as identified in the Busan Outcome. Some delegates stressed the need for and importance of financial support for capacity building. Others highlighted the possible work programme of the platform, noting that it should respond to the functions of the platform. Delegates noted: the core functions of the platform should go beyond assessments; mechanisms for incorporating the input of NGOs are required; IPBES should not focus only on implementation; the need for a procedure for prioritization of tasks by the plenary; and the need to conduct country assessments of available knowledge.

Delegates stressed the importance of operationalizing the platform, with Chair Watson noting that this was a key challenge of the plenary session.

**Final Outcome:** The draft report of the first session of the plenary meeting (UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/L.1) states that the deliberations of delegates are reflected in the annex to the report.

**FUNCTIONS AND STRUCTURES OF BODIES THAT MIGHT BE ESTABLISHED UNDER THE PLATFORM:** Delegates met throughout the week to consider the proposed functions and structures of bodies that might be established under the platform (UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/4) based on the Busan Outcome. The document outlines the institutional arrangements as well as the possible functions and structures that may be established under the platform.

**Membership to the platform and the plenary:** Delegates took up this item on Monday. Delegates queried the membership status of regional economic integration organizations, with some noting issues of additionality and competence. On this, the EU and its member states said they would not accept having an observer status. Chair Watson noted current understanding is that such organizations have full membership but participation is to be governed by the rules of procedure of IPBES. He suggested clarifying the exact role of regional economic integration organizations, other UN organizations and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) when establishing these rules.

Some delegates suggested broad participation that includes member countries of UN specialized agencies while others said membership should be limited to UN member states. Additionally, others favored having universal membership. Delegates also raised the question of whether states will automatically be members of IPBES or only those who signify their intent to be a member.

On Tuesday, discussions on membership to the platform were resumed, with some delegates cautioning that the opportunity for open participation raises uncertainty as to whether parties will be bound by decisions taken in plenary or under other bodies. Delegates suggested parties indicate their intent to be members and that the membership process be as simple as possible. Delegates requested clarity on the difference between membership of the plenary and that of the platform. Noting that there is still a need for further clarification, Chair Watson established a Friends of the Chair group chaired by Vice-Chair Bráulio Ferreira de Souza Dias to reach consensus on text regarding membership.

In the afternoon, Dias reported back to plenary that the Friends of the Chair group had deliberated on the issue of membership to the platform over lunch but not on the issues of participation in the plenary. He noted that: there was an agreement that membership to IPBES will not be compulsory; there was a consensus for states to signal their willingness to become members; that differing views on the rules determining states' membership to the platform still remain and further consultations are needed. The group resumed deliberations on Wednesday and Thursday.

On Wednesday, the Friends of the Chair group reported that they were yet to reach a consensus on membership to the plenary. He noted that initial discussions in the group focused on the language regarding inputs from governments, UN bodies and other stakeholders. Some delegates opposed merging text on this issue as the rules of procedure differentiating governments from UN bodies would be lost. Others emphasized the need to include indigenous peoples as stakeholders and called for establishing a mechanism to ensure participation of civil society. One delegate proposed referencing "indigenous and local communities" as internationally accepted language. Another called for referencing "indigenous peoples and local communities." The term "peoples" remained in brackets for further deliberation. Regarding establishing a process of prioritization of requests, delegates agreed with proposed text with the amendment referencing not only "requests from governments" but also "inputs and suggestions from other stakeholders."

On Friday, delegates discussed the revised document (UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/CRP.6). Some delegates re-emphasized the inclusion of "indigenous peoples" in text citing the contribution of "indigenous and local knowledge." Other delegates requested that references to "ecosystem services" be replaced with "functions of ecosystems," which could then be taken up for decision at the second plenary session.

**Functions of the Plenary:** Introducing this issue on Tuesday, Chair Watson explained that some functions presented in document UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/4 were agreed to in Busan, while others are new. Delegates discussed priority setting, with some favoring priorities for action being set only in response to the requests from governments. Others called for the plenary to approve only executive summaries, noting that line-by-line approval of major reports may deter scientists' participation.

Delegates called for flexibility in designing the scope of assessments saying that the plenary should define a broad scope for possible working groups' activities. Others also discussed: defining financial arrangements for undertaking the relevant activities; emphasizing capacity building and transfer of technology; and the need for a procedure for the acceptance of membership.

**Officers of the Plenary:** Delegates addressed the issue of officers of the plenary for the first time on Tuesday. Delegates debated between having a single chair with four vice-chairs and having a platform served by two co-chairs one each from a developed country and a developing country, and three vice-chairs. Delegates stressed the need for the officers of the plenary to: have a high level of technical and scientific expertise; be appointed with a clearly defined term limit; and be appointed on a rotational basis.

Chair Watson then introduced the proposed functions of the key officers of the platform, noting that these would have to be specified in the rules of procedure to avoid ambiguity. Delegates debated the tasks of the officers, with some countries saying that the tasks should be divided among the chair and vice-chairs and that the task of presiding over subsidiary bodies should be assigned to the vice-chairs. Uncertainty remained on the functions of the chair as the work programme for the platform had not yet been determined, with delegates opting to keep the text in brackets until the work programme had been defined.

On the criteria for selecting the chair and vice-chairs, delegates said that IPBES, as an intergovernmental body, should guide governments in nominating candidates rather than devising selection criteria. Others noted the importance of the chair understanding the dynamics, having leadership capabilities and gaining consensus. Delegates included references to: experience with assessments along with the criterion on scientific experience; ecosystem functions, resilience and adaptation; and understanding the role and knowledge of indigenous groups. Chair Watson asked the Secretariat to restructure the text for consideration by plenary.

Addressing the revised text on the election of the chair and vice-chairs on Wednesday, some delegates again called for vice-chairs to be appointed on a rotational basis; with others saying that this should be on a regional basis. Some delegates proposed including a reference on selecting the officers of the plenary as members of an expanded bureau. The reference was retained in an additional bracketed paragraph pending decision on the IPBES structure, while the original provision was adopted with minor amendments.

Delegates addressed the issue again on Thursday and agreed to take gender balance into account in the selection of officers. The importance of balance between scientific disciplines was also emphasized.

On the functions of the chair, delegates agreed, following deliberations, that these functions be defined as set out in the rules of procedure and be directed by the plenary. Delegates also decided to: retain the function of “representing the platform”; reject a proposal by the EU and its member states to include outreach and communication activities; and delete reference to other functions that depend on the establishment of the subsidiary bodies.

On the functions of the vice-chairs, delegates agreed that these should be defined in the same way as the functions of the chair. Delegates also agreed: that the vice-chairs should participate in the work of the bureau; that presiding over meetings of subsidiary bodies is not a function of vice-chairs; to highlight in the rules of procedure that the vice-chairs act on behalf of the chair, “where necessary”; and to delete reference to carrying out outreach and communication activities.

On guidelines on the nomination and selection of both the chair and the vice-chairs, delegates agreed to delete reference to previous experience with assessments and the ability to represent the platform at all levels.

**Subsidiary Bodies:** On Tuesday, Chair Watson introduced the issue of the possible functions of subsidiary bodies and potential options for the structure and composition of subsidiary bodies of the plenary (UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/4).

Delegates suggested including only a short list of functions characterized by the type of function. Some delegates said the governance structure should be able to address, *inter alia*, intersessional issues and that the bureau’s terms of reference should include both administrative and scientific requirements. Others supported establishing two subsidiary bodies, one with administrative functions and the other with technical and scientific functions, with one delegate saying that the functions of subsidiary bodies be determined before defining the governance structure.

Minimum levels of bureaucracy were favored, with some proposing the establishment of various subsidiary bodies, including a science panel and an administrative panel. Others cautioned that the determinations would depend on the programme of work, with some suggesting that the subsidiary bodies deal only with administration and working groups be established to consider scientific issues. Chair Watson and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) representative explained the institutional structure of IPCC and its evolution highlighting, *inter alia*, that the executive committee has been established as a subset of the IPCC Bureau to undertake intersessional activities.

Delegates stressed the need for flexibility when establishing subsidiary bodies and cautioned against overlapping tasks between subsidiary bodies and the bureau. Delegates were also reminded that IPBES is not only concerned with assessments, with some delegates saying that the platform could benefit from a regional structure and incorporate capacity building and technology transfer. Delegates also emphasized the role of NGOs.

Deliberations continued on Thursday morning, with delegates asking for clarity on the relationship between the subsidiary bodies and the plenary, with some noting that subsidiary bodies should facilitate the operations of the platform and provide oversight as decided by the plenary.

In the evening session on Thursday, delegates decided, after deliberations, to rename the section on the form and functions of subsidiary bodies as “administrative and scientific functions to facilitate the work of the platform,” and to postpone the decision on whether subsidiary bodies, the bureau, or the secretariat would carry out these functions.

Delegates discussed these functions and agreed to: bracket the approval of requests by observer organizations until membership issues were clarified; assign the monitoring of the secretariat’s performance to the plenary; and describe the function regarding financial resources as review of the management of resources and observance of financial rules, and likewise keep this formulation in brackets.

On the scientific and technical functions of the subsidiary bodies, some delegates said developing a list of contributors to the work programme would discourage contributions from

new researchers. Others suggested including other types of knowledge, such as traditional knowledge, and other stakeholders besides scientists, and consideration of a diversity of disciplines.

Some delegates also called for an additional paragraph on facilitating technology transfer according to the work programme of the platform. The paragraph was included in brackets. Others introduced an additional paragraph on providing guidance on how to use indigenous and local knowledge in the science-policy interface. They proposed exploring methodologies to incorporate different knowledge systems, with a delegate proposing to include this item in the work programme on knowledge generation. Delegates agreed that subsidiary bodies should explore ways and means to take different knowledge systems into account in the science-policy interface.

Resuming the issue on Friday, Chair Watson introduced the text prepared by the Secretariat with two options for the structure and composition of subsidiary bodies, and asked delegates for comments.

Many delegates favored establishment of one subsidiary body in the form of an extended bureau of the plenary. Some proposed a small bureau to oversee procedural and administrative functions, and a larger bureau with substantive functions composed of representatives from working groups, regional hubs, science and policy bodies, and members from MEAs, IGOs and UN agencies. One delegate highlighted that assigning additional functions to the bureau does not prevent it from being a part of the plenary and another emphasized distinguishing governance and scientific work. It was proposed that the expanded bureau also undertake functions for intersessional work and asked to select additional members on the basis of their scientific and technical expertise. Delegates also proposed that a member of the expanded bureau could have different duties, including administrative and technical, and different groups should therefore be determined. Others suggested that the extended bureau should ensure scientific credibility.

Others preferred establishing two subsidiary bodies. One delegate suggested an expanded version of the bureau taking administrative functions and a science panel to address substantive issues of the platform's work programme, with the capacity to create working groups. Delegates questioned the roles of the different members of an expanded bureau and suggested one executive committee and one expanded bureau instead. Some supported a bureau and a subsidiary body with the option of developing regional, technical and scientific hubs. Others favored two bodies but said an expanded bureau could be sufficient if it were to fulfill administrative functions and have scientific capacities.

**Secretariat:** This issue was taken up for the first time on Tuesday. Delegates emphasized that the secretariat should only carry out administrative functions for the plenary and other bodies and that it should be a "lean" secretariat. Some delegates suggested distributing the secretariat's functions to various international organizations, while others emphasized the need to ensure the secretariat's independence. Chair Watson asked the Secretariat to redraft text, noting a tendency towards supporting one central hub and a lean secretariat.

Addressing the role of the secretariat again on Thursday, delegates proposed that the secretariat should also service subsidiary bodies.

**Trust Fund:** Introducing this issue on Tuesday, Chair Watson noted the need to define "a whole series of rules" for the operation of the trust fund. Delegates highlighted the importance of a plenary that can decide on the use of available resources and some welcomed contributions from the private sector and other stakeholders as long as these resources are not to be earmarked. Other delegates called attention to the role of in-kind contributions.

Some delegates urged that contributions to the fund be voluntary, while others rejected the notion of private sector contributions. Delegates agreed to postpone the decision on the role of the private sector.

Delegates addressed the trust fund again on Wednesday and debated whether there would be one or more trust funds, with some favoring a single trust fund without reference to it being a "core" trust fund. Other paragraphs on independently reviewing the platform on a periodic basis, a process for the adoption of reports, rules of procedure and financial rules, were adopted with minor amendments.

On Friday, delegates decided, after deliberations, to change the title of the section on the trust fund to "Financial and other contributions to the platform," and to address under this title the trust fund, additional financial contributions and in-kind contributions. Some expressed concern with private sector contributions and suggested language that such funding come without conditionalities, should not orientate the work of the platform, and could not be earmarked to specific activities. Delegates agreed to some changes and deleted references that the trust's funds should not be earmarked and should be a "blind" trust fund.

Delegates decided to address contributions that are additional to the trust fund in a separate paragraph, highlighting that these should be exceptional and be subject to the approval of the plenary. Some delegates asked what the role of these additional contributions could be and Chair Watson referenced experience with the IPCC where governments financed workshops or activities without channeling resources through the trust fund. Delegates similarly decided to address in-kind contributions in a separate paragraph and to encourage contributions from the scientific community and other knowledge holders and stakeholders, with the latter two retained in brackets.

**Evaluation of the operation of the platform:** This topic was considered on Tuesday. Delegates asked for clarification on the evaluation process, with some noting the relationship with legal issues. Chair Watson suggested broadening the scope and modalities of evaluation when considering the rules of procedure.

The issue was considered again on Friday. Delegates agreed to bracket the paragraph saying the report of the meeting is a fundamental issue and needs further deliberation.

**Final Outcome:** The outcome document, which includes the reflection of delegates' deliberations on the functions and structures of bodies that might be established under the platform was annexed to the draft report of the first session of the plenary meeting (UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/L.1, Annex III). Discussions will be resumed during the second session of plenary in 2012.

**RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR MEETINGS OF THE PLATFORM:** On Tuesday, the UNEP Secretariat introduced document UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/5 on the rules of procedure for the platform's plenary. Delegates stressed that the platform needs to adopt its own rules of procedure. They stressed rules on: representation, expertise, adoption of decisions, and

intersessional activities. Some delegates suggested drawing on rules of procedure from other processes, with others cautioning against. Some delegates called for addressing the work programme first, noting that this will have a bearing on the rules of procedure.

Chair Watson proposed forming a Friends of the Chair group to undertake a first reading of the draft rules and proposed avoiding discussion on issues related to membership, participation and observers, which were already addressed by the Friends of the Chair group on membership.

One delegate argued that decisions need to be taken by consensus and not by voting and that the rules of procedure should envisage the participation of observers. Chair Watson noted that once IPBES is established, it may not always be possible to take decisions by consensus and invited considering as a backstop what a voting system might look like in the rules of procedure.

**Final Outcome:** The draft report of the first session of the plenary meeting (UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/L.1) notes that delegates exchanged initial views on the rules of procedure for the meetings of the platform, and that several delegates noted the need for adopting the rules of procedure to support the function of the platform. It was decided to undertake intersessional work to make progress on the matter.

**PROCESS AND CRITERIA FOR SELECTING THE HOST INSTITUTION OR INSTITUTIONS AND THE PHYSICAL LOCATION OF THE PLATFORM'S SECRETARIAT:** On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced document UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/6 on the process and criteria for selecting the host institution and the location of the secretariat. Delegates met on Wednesday and Thursday to discuss the document.

**Criteria for selecting the host institution:** On Wednesday, delegates began deliberations with some supporting the invitation that was made to the four sponsor organizations, UNESCO, UNEP, FAO and UNDP to submit a proposal for co-hosting the platform and queried if it was thus necessary to open this issue. Chair Watson said that IPBES would still benefit from discussions on the elements to be expected in proposals. Some delegates cautioned against limiting submissions to the four sponsor organizations.

Delegates noted the need for referencing experience on biodiversity and ecosystem services in the selection criteria. They proposed that the administrative functions of the secretariat be hosted in one institution, with one delegate saying that hosts should be able to provide stable financial support. Delegates noted that there were still gaps in the selection criteria that should be addressed.

**Process for inviting organizations to signify their interest in hosting the secretariat:** During Wednesday's deliberations delegates underscored that the process for selecting a host institution is separate from selecting the physical location of the secretariat.

Some delegates proposed increasing the length of applications from 10 to 20 pages, with a 15-page length being agreed to. Other proposed that joint or individual offers were possible. Delegates agreed that only the executive summaries of applications be translated into UN languages. Delegates said that governments should consider these offers with the view to making "a decision" rather than "recommendations" on the secretariat's physical location.

**Process for reviewing proposals and selecting the host institution:** On Wednesday, delegates noted that the bureau should not undertake a first review of proposals and that governments should have the opportunity to review and discuss all proposals. Chair Watson suggested 15 December 2011 as the deadline for bids and proposals, requesting the UNEP Secretariat to circulate them shortly thereafter.

When the topic was taken up on Thursday, delegates proposed text reflecting that the bureau would "forward" rather than "disseminate" offers from interested organizations to all governments. Others said that the offers should be forwarded to governments with a view to making "decisions" on the host institutions of the secretariat.

**Criteria for selecting the physical location of the secretariat:** Delegates began deliberations on the criteria for selecting the physical location of the secretariat on Thursday, with some rejecting criteria that would exclude developing countries, and others noting that the location needs to ensure safety, good governance and efficient resource use. Delegates discussed whether the presence of an international organization should be a criterion for selection, with some saying that only international organizations relevant to biodiversity should be a criterion. Others noted that the presence of international organizations related to biodiversity and ecosystems has no consequence on the secretariat's functions. One delegate called for considering the specific situation of developing countries, citing capacity gaps, natural resource abundance, lack of scientific assessments and the relationship between biodiversity and poverty reduction as possible gauges.

Some delegates favored a single location for the secretariat but welcomed considering the establishment of regional hubs. Delegates cautioned that the regional hubs could increase on the work programme and the role of subsidiary bodies, and urged separating discussions on the secretariat headquarters and regional hubs. Some expressed concern that regional hubs increase bureaucracy and reduce efficiency.

Some delegates requested that diplomatic representation be on a country rather than city basis. Delegates opposed to proposals having a safety and security element, which was deleted after deliberations.

**Proposed process for inviting submissions of proposals:** During Friday's adoption of the draft meeting report, some delegates queried how proposals could be received by the UNEP Secretariat if there had been no agreement on the type of secretariat to be formed under the platform, with others noting that proposals based on which option of secretariat structure they prefer is possible. Chair Watson noted that proposals for the physical location of the secretariat must be submitted by 15 January 2012, after which they will be compiled and distributed to governments.

**Process for reviewing proposals and selecting the secretariat's physical location:** Delegates discussed this issue on Wednesday and Friday, proposing allowing governments to submit their proposals to the Bureau eight weeks prior to the second session of the plenary and that these be sent without review to governments after two weeks. Delegates called for compilation and translation of bids, as well as some urging for the provision of an executive summary of submissions. Others proposed uniform formats for the bids. Chair Watson proposed that the Bureau work with the Secretariat to elaborate a draft suggested format for the bids.

**Final Outcome:** The draft report of the first session of the plenary meeting (UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/L.1) states that the delegates took up the considerations contained in the secretariat note. Governments and Institutions are invited to submit their proposals based on the guidance set out in the annex to the report of the first session of the plenary meeting.

**WORK PROGRAMME OF THE PLATFORM:** On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced document UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/7 considering the possible work programme of the platform. Delegates, in their general comments, suggested that the platform should focus on compiling scientific data and urged consideration of: the importance of regional hubs as a mechanism to attract stakeholders; the need for relevant assessments; and capacity building. It was suggested that intersessional work should take place on the work programme.

Delegates highlighted the importance of regional coordination mechanisms and thematic assessments. Others suggested that a review of status and trends methodologies at the national level is needed and called for establishing a standing committee on tools and methodologies. Some delegates noted the need for: hosting data sets; rules to conduct, coordinate and review assessments; and the provision of standardized guidelines. One delegate emphasized the use of ecosystem approaches in assessing the knowledge on ecosystem services.

Delegates urged that the work programme respond to all four functions of the IPBES. Others suggested defining what relevant policy information for decision-making is and using, *inter alia*, the targets and indicators of the CBD Strategic Plan. They emphasized: communication, public awareness, networking, and funding.

Delegates suggested that using traditional knowledge could enhance capacity building and technology transfer, while others pointed to the role of intellectual property in knowledge generation for biodiversity protection. Delegates also called for: bottom-up approaches; broad approaches for evaluating biodiversity and ecosystem services; and the need for the economic valuation of ecosystems.

**Final Outcome:** The draft report of the first session of the plenary meeting (UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/L.1) outlines the preliminary sharing of ideas and highlights general recognition for delivering the four functions of the platform in an integrated manner. Delegates agreed to continue their work intersessionally, with country submissions on the work programme to be received no later than 15 December 2011.

### CLOSING SESSION

On Friday afternoon, Chair Watson led delegates through the draft report of the first session of the plenary meeting (UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/L.1) and its annexes. Delegates adopted the report with amendments (as referred to in detail in the relevant subsections of this report).

Chair Watson introduced a draft resolution of the first session of the plenary meeting (UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/CRP.7). Several delegates said they were unwilling to accept the plenipotentiaries' conference planned for the last day of the second session of the plenary meeting. Delegates agreed to set aside the resolution.

UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner gave a vote of thanks to the Chair and the Vice-Chairs for their work during the session and thanked delegates for their participation.

Chair Watson closed the meeting at 6:30 pm.

## A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE MEETING

In the face of its continuous and alarming erosion and unsustainable use, biodiversity and ecosystem services are gaining increasing attention in the international arena, including in the context of climate change, global food security, development and poverty reduction, and the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD also known as Rio+20) dialogue on the green economy.

Over the past decade there has been growing international agreement that the system for linking science and policy in the area of biodiversity and ecosystem services needed further improvement, resulting ultimately in the process for creating an Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). The first session of the IPBES plenary meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, has made important steps forward in establishing and operationalizing the platform, which aims at strengthening the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long-term human well-being and sustainable development.

This analysis provides an assessment of the main achievements in Nairobi, the degree of cooperation and conflict, and the obstacles that appeared in the negotiations. It begins by examining the most important achievements of this meeting in further elaborating the IPBES functions, structures and work programme. Then, it presents the key legal, political and technical obstacles to establishing and operationalizing the platform, with a focus on their interlinked dimensions. Finally, it concludes by considering the key necessary steps for operationalizing the platform at the second session of plenary in April 2012.

### THE CHICKEN AND EGG ISSUE: DOES FORM FOLLOW FUNCTION OR VICE VERSA?

In his opening remarks to the IPBES plenary, UN Environment Programme (UNEP) Executive Director, Achim Steiner, emphasized that many issues concerning the establishment and operationalization of IPBES were agreed at the Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Meeting on IPBES held in Busan, Republic of Korea, in June 2010, and therefore contained in the outcome document of that meeting ("the Busan Outcome"). During the week's discussions, many delegates urged making the platform fully operational in accordance with the Busan Outcome, which was widely endorsed by delegates in Nairobi, and seen as a solid foundation for the platform.

Deliberations to establish the institutional and operational structure of the platform considered important political, institutional and technical issues. The elaboration of the IPBES functions, structures and work programme, in particular, were shown to be intrinsically linked. The Busan Outcome outlines four functions for IPBES, namely: knowledge generation, assessment, policy support and capacity building. This meeting clarified the parties' different understandings of the relationship between these functions, and was of particular importance for further defining its structure and work programme...and vice versa. Whereas it was widely agreed that IPBES must fulfill all functions, preferences varied as to which should be the focus of the activities to be undertaken under each function of the work programme and there were divergent views on the need to adopt

a centralized versus decentralized structure to support capacity building, for example through regional and thematic hubs, and bottom-up approaches to assessments at different levels.

Deliberations on institutional matters, including the form of the bodies under IPBES, thus brought to the table more fundamental questions on the primary functions and objective of the platform. When delegates discussed the capabilities that the IPBES chair should have, for example, some highlighted credibility in the scientific community and the ability to organize scientific assessments, while others emphasized that the chair should be able to “effectively deliver scientific indications into the policy process” and make sure that the platform “shores up decision making.” The platform, many delegates agreed in informal talks, will have to make its way forward step-by-step and define its priorities in this process.

### **THE POLITICAL, LEGAL AND TECHNICAL DIMENSIONS: A COMPLICATED BIRTH**

The legal basis and process for the formal establishment of IPBES was a contentious issue that was not resolved at this meeting. While all countries agreed on the urgency of operationalizing the platform, a wide divergence of views emerged from the debate on whether or not the platform had already been established by the UNGA Resolution that requested UNEP to convene this plenary (UNGA Resolution 65/162). Delegates also debated the need for further actions, such as convening a conference of plenipotentiaries during the second plenary meeting or involving the UN General Assembly.

For instance, in relation to the option of providing for a single secretariat with distributed functions between the host institutions, some delegates argued that further action would be required by the relevant UN bodies and agencies to legally establish the platform. In particular, even though UNEP, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have already received the mandate to co-host the platform, and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) will consider this shortly, one expert noted that the early establishment of an agreement between these organizations would be required to clarify their respective roles in administering the platform.

Delegates also considered the various options having implications for the platform status, which ranged from IPBES being established under the UN system to it being established as an independent intergovernmental body administered by one of more UN agencies, as well as its possible subsequent transformation into a UN entity.

As a possible way forward, Chair Watson suggested parties consider one another’s position with the view to coming to an agreement at the second session of plenary. In terms of both process and substance, a draft resolution prepared by the UNEP Secretariat suggested including a paragraph on convening a conference of plenipotentiaries at the second session of the plenary with the view to fully operationalizing the platform, during the second session of plenary “including through its possible establishment.” In another paragraph, the draft resolution also provided for inviting the four prospective UN host institutions jointly to convene such a conference. While the plenary set aside the draft resolution because agreement could not be reached on these important paragraphs, it was agreed that the legal status of IPBES requires further clarification. At the

same time, the other most important operative elements of the draft resolution were promptly incorporated into the report of the meeting and adopted with various amendments.

### **CONCLUSIONS: SETTING A NEW PRECEDENT FOR IMPROVING BIODIVERSITY GOVERNANCE**

Overall, the majority of delegates considered this meeting to have fulfilled its mandate, in particular, the elaboration of modalities and institutional arrangements by agreeing on, *inter alia*: the process and elements for selecting the host institution or institutions; the physical location of the platform’s secretariat; and the decision to establish an intersessional process to undertake further work on the rules of procedure and consider bids for the secretariat’s location and host institutions.

While the meeting also agreed on important aspects concerning the structure of the plenary, the bureau and the secretariat, and received useful comments on articulating their functions and the work programme, outstanding issues include the structure, role, and functions of subsidiary bodies, including the potential establishment of a science panel, an expanded bureau, and the issue of a central secretariat *vis-à-vis* regional hubs.

Civil society organizations expressed satisfaction with the openness of the delegates at the first session of the plenary, particularly, among others: recognizing different knowledge systems, including indigenous and local knowledge; and encouraging and taking into account inputs and suggestions made by all relevant stakeholders. They also hoped that the further elaboration of the functions and operating principles of the platform will be conducive to exploring new mechanisms for the active participation of civil society organizations, indigenous peoples and local communities, along with the scientific community, to biodiversity conservation and its governance.

Notwithstanding the complexity of the legal, political and technical issues discussed at this meeting, and the sometimes divergent views, most participants left the final plenary in a positive mood, noting that delegates had worked productively with a cooperative attitude throughout the week “as if the platform was already established.” At the same time, they recognized that the formal outcomes of this meeting have left a remarkable degree of “suspense and uncertainty” about the status of IPBES and about the process by which it will be possible to clarify this key outstanding issue.

### **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

**UNCCD COP 10:** The tenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) will consider agenda items related to, *inter alia*: the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018); the programme and budget; the evaluation of existing and potential reporting, accountability and institutional arrangements for the Global Mechanism; mechanisms to facilitate regional coordination of the implementation of the Convention; progress in the implementation of the comprehensive communication Strategy; procedures for the participation of civil society organizations (CSOs) in meetings and processes of the UNCCD; and maintenance of the roster of experts and creation, as necessary, of *ad hoc* panels of experts. **dates:** 10-21 October 2011 **location:** Changwon City, Republic of Korea **contact:**

UNCCD Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-2800 **fax:** +49-228-815-2898 **email:** secretariat@unccd.int **www:** <http://www.unccd.int/cop/cop10/menu.php>

**Third Expert Workshop on the City Biodiversity Index (Singapore Index) and Meeting on CBO 1:** This expert workshop, organized by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Government of Singapore, will allow participants to report on their experiences in using the index and to work together on the finalization of the tool. The City Biodiversity Outlook 1 (CBO 1) meeting will focus on the production plan and content development, key messages and on how to integrate the Singapore Index in the CBO 1 – synthesis. **dates:** 11-13 October 2011 **location:** Singapore **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288-6588 **email:** secretariat@cbd.int **www:** <http://www.cbd.int/authorities/importantevents/>

**UNCSD Regional Preparatory Meeting in the Arab Region:** The UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and partners will convene an Arab regional preparatory meeting for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD). **dates:** 16-17 October 2011 **location:** Cairo, Egypt **contact:** UNCSD Secretariat **email:** uncsd2012@un.org **www:** <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/meetingdetails.asp?referenceNUM=1545E>

**UNCSD Regional Preparatory Meeting for Asia and the Pacific Region:** The UN Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific and partners will convene a regional meeting in preparation for the UNCSD. **dates:** 17-20 October 2011 **location:** Seoul, Republic of Korea **contact:** UNCSD Secretariat **email:** uncsd2012@un.org **www:** <http://www.unescap.org/esd/environment/Rio20/pages/RPM.html>

**Expert Meeting on Impacts of Ocean Acidification on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity:** This CBD Expert Meeting aims to: identify gaps and barriers in existing monitoring and scientific assessment of those impacts; develop options for addressing identified gaps and barriers; and identify necessary collaboration activities to implement identified options. **dates:** 19-20 October 2011 **location:** Montreal, Canada **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288-6588 **email:** secretariat@cbd.int **www:** <http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=EMIOAMCB-01>

**UNCSD Regional Preparatory Meeting for Africa:** The UN Economic Commission for Africa and partners will convene an African regional preparatory meeting for the UNCSD. **dates:** 20-25 October 2011 **location:** Addis Ababa, Ethiopia **contact:** UNCSD Secretariat **email:** uncsd2012@un.org **www:** [http://www.uneca.org/eca\\_programmes/sdd/events/Rio20/preparatory.asp](http://www.uneca.org/eca_programmes/sdd/events/Rio20/preparatory.asp)

**Seventh Meeting of the CBD Working Group on Article 8(j):** This meeting will discuss, among others, an in-depth dialogue on ecosystem management, ecosystem services and protected areas; and several tasks of the multi-year programme of work on the implementation of Article 8(j), including a strategy to integrate Article 10 with a focus on Article 10(c) (customary sustainable use) as a cross-cutting issue into the programmes of work and thematic areas of the Convention. **dates:** 31 October - 4 November 2011 **location:** Montreal, Canada **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288-6588 **email:** secretariat@cbd.int **www:** <http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=WG8J-07>

**CBD SBSTTA 15:** The 15th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 15) of the CBD will discuss, *inter alia*, scientific and technical issues relevant to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020; invasive alien species; inland water biodiversity; sustainable use of biodiversity; and Arctic biodiversity. **dates:** 7-11 November 2011 **location:** Montreal, Canada **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288-6588 **email:** secretariat@cbd.int **www:** <http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=SBSTTA-15>

**Tenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species:** The 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) will be convened in Bergen, Norway. **dates:** 20-25 November 2011 **location:** Bergen, Norway **contact:** UNEP/CMS Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-2426 **fax:** +49-228-815-2449 **email:** secretariat@cms.int **www:** [http://www.cms.int/bodies/COP/cop10/documents\\_overview.htm](http://www.cms.int/bodies/COP/cop10/documents_overview.htm)

**UNCSD Regional Preparatory Meeting for the ECE Region:** The UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and partners will convene a regional meeting in preparation for the UNCSD. **dates:** 1-2 December 2011 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** UNCSD Secretariat **email:** uncsd2012@un.org **www:** <http://www.unece.org/env/SustainableDevelopment/RPM2011/RPM2011.html>

**Twenty-fifth International Congress on Conservation Biology:** Organized by the Society for Conservation Biology, and convened under the theme “Engaging Society in Conservation,” the Congress is a forum for participants to address the many conservation challenges. **dates:** 5-9 December 2011 **location:** Auckland, New Zealand **contact:** Kerry O’Connell **email:** 2011@conbio.org **www:** <http://www.conbio.org/Activities/Meetings/2011/?CFID=27405269&CFTOKEN=39589021>

**Eye on Earth Summit:** The Eye on Earth Summit: Pursuing a Vision is being organized under the theme “Dynamic system to keep the world environmental situation under review.” This event will launch the global environmental information network (EIN) strengthening initiative and address major policy and technical issues. The expected outcome is a clear statement on ways and means to strengthen existing initiatives and fill gaps towards informed policy making in support of a sustainable future. **dates:** 12-15 December 2011 **location:** Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates **contact:** Marije Heurter, Eye on Earth Event Coordinator **tel:** +971 2 693 4516 **email:** Marije.heurter@ead.ae or Eoecommunity@ead.ae **www:** <http://www.eyeonearthsummit.org/>

**Second Intersessional Meeting for UNCSD:** The second intersessional meeting for the UNCSD will be convened in late 2011. **dates:** 15-16 December 2011 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UNCSD Secretariat **email:** uncsd2012@un.org **www:** <http://www.uncsd2012.org/>

**UNCSD Informal Consultations:** The UNCSD Preparatory Committee will hold a series of information consultations on the zero draft of the outcome document in January, February, March and April 2012. **dates:** 16-18 January 2012; 13-17 February 2012; 19-23 March 2012 and 30 April - 4 May 2012 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UNCSD Secretariat **email:** uncsd2012@un.org **www:** <http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/>

**12th Special Session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum:** The Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) will hold its 12th special session to focus on the UNCSD themes of green economy and international environmental governance and emerging issues. **dates:** 20-22 February 2012 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **contact:** Jamil Ahmad, Secretary, Governing Bodies, UNEP **phone:** +254-20-762-3411 **fax:** +254-20 762-3929 **email:** sgc.sgb@unep.org **www:** <http://www.unep.org/resources/gov/#>

**26th Meeting of the CITES Animals Committee:** The 26th meeting of the Animals Committee of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) will address a number of agenda items, including sharks, snakes, sturgeons, corals, and listing criteria for commercially exploited aquatic species. It will convene immediately prior to the joint meeting of the CITES Animals and Plants Committees. **dates:** 15-20 March 2012 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** CITES Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-8139/40 **fax:** +41-22-797-3417 **email:** [info@cites.org](mailto:info@cites.org) **www:** <http://www.cites.org>

**Joint meeting of the CITES Animals and Plants Committees:** The joint meeting of the CITES Animals and Plants Committees will address a number of agenda items common to the two scientific committees, including: cooperation with other conventions; guidelines on non-detriment findings and transport of live specimens. **dates:** 22-24 March 2012 **location:** Dublin, Ireland **contact:** CITES Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-8139/40 **fax:** +41-22-797-3417 **email:** [info@cites.org](mailto:info@cites.org) **www:** <http://www.cites.org>

**20th Meeting of the CITES Plants Committee:** The 20th meeting of the CITES Plants Committee will address a number of agenda items, including: bigleaf mahogany, African cherry, and other timber issues; annotations in CITES appendices; and cooperation with other initiatives. **dates:** 26-30 March 2012 **location:** Dublin, Ireland **contact:** CITES Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-8139/40 **fax:** +41-22-797-3417 **email:** [info@cites.org](mailto:info@cites.org) **www:** <http://www.cites.org>

**Planet Under Pressure: New Knowledge toward Solutions:** This conference will focus on solutions to the global sustainability challenge. It will provide a comprehensive update of the pressure planet Earth is now under and discuss solutions at all scales to move societies on to a sustainable pathway and provide scientific leadership towards the UNCSD. **dates:** 26-29 March 2012 **location:** London, United Kingdom **contact:** Jenny Wang **phone:** +86-10-8520-8796 **email:** [Jen.wang@elsevier.com](mailto:Jen.wang@elsevier.com) **www:** <http://www.planetunderpressure2012.net>

**Third Intersessional Meeting for UNCSD:** The final intersessional meeting for the UNCSD will be convened in March 2012. **dates:** 26-27 March 2012 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UNCSD Secretariat **email:** [uncsd2012@un.org](mailto:uncsd2012@un.org) **www:** <http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/>

**2nd Meeting of the Open-Ended Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Committee for the Nagoya Protocol on ABS (ICNP-2):** **dates:** 9-13 April 2012 **location:** Delhi, India **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288-6588 **email:** [secretariat@cbd.int](mailto:secretariat@cbd.int) **www:** <http://www.cbd.int/meetings/>

**2nd Session of the Plenary Meeting on an Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services:** The second session of the plenary meeting will

continue with the deliberations on the institutional arrangements and modalities of the IPBES, with a view to operationalizing the body at the meeting. **dates:** April 2012 **location:** TBA **contact:** UNEP Secretariat **phone:** + 254-20-762-5135 **email:** [ipbes.unep@unep.org](mailto:ipbes.unep@unep.org) **www:** <http://ipbes.net/>

**4th meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the CBD (WGRI):** The meeting will review implementation of the new Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011-2020), including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Its recommendations will be submitted to COP 11 in Hyderabad, India in 2012, for its consideration and adoption. **dates:** 7-11 May 2012 **location:** Montreal, Canada

**Third PrepCom for UNCSD:** The third meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the UNCSD will take place in Brazil just prior to the conference. **dates:** 28-30 May 2012 **location:** Rio De Janeiro, Brazil **contact:** UNCSD Secretariat **email:** [uncsd2012@un.org](mailto:uncsd2012@un.org) **www:** <http://www.uncsd2012.org/>

**UN Conference on Sustainable Development:** The UNCSD will mark the 20th anniversary of the UN Conference on Environment and Development, which convened in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. **dates:** 4-6 June 2012 **location:** Rio De Janeiro, Brazil **contact:** UNCSD Secretariat **email:** [uncsd2012@un.org](mailto:uncsd2012@un.org) **www:** <http://www.uncsd2012.org/>

## GLOSSARY

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
COP	Conference of the Parties
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GC	Governing Council
GMEF	Global Ministerial Environmental Forum
IMoSEB	International Mechanism on Scientific Expertise on Biodiversity
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPBES	Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
MA	Millennium Ecosystem Assessment
MEAs	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly