



IPBES-2 HIGHLIGHTS FRIDAY, 13 DECEMBER 2013

On Friday, 13 December 2013, IPBES-2 met in contact groups during the day and in Plenary in the evening. In the contact groups, delegates addressed the programme of work, including the terms of reference (ToR) for three task forces; the budget; and rules and procedures. In the evening Plenary, delegates adopted decisions on the work programme’s conceptual framework and on financial and budgetary arrangements. It was announced that Anne Larigauderie was appointed IPBES Executive Secretary.

CONTACT GROUPS

WORK PROGRAMME AND THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: Co-Chair Baste introduced the new costing table for the work programme deliverables based on the staggered schedule agreed during Thursday’s discussions. The Secretariat noted that peak expenditure now occurs in the third year. He also said that the fast track assessments have an additional round of review, which has been budgeted for. On a question regarding the cost of regional and subregional assessments, he said the highest cost scenario has been used. Delegates agreed on the cost schedule presented.

Co-Chair Baste introduced the non-paper on the ToR for the task forces on capacity building, knowledge and data, and indigenous and local knowledge. The Secretariat gave an overview of the ToR, saying that the paper sets out the responsibilities, draft membership rules and *modus operandi* of each task force.

On membership of the capacity building task force, one delegate opposed allowing observers to nominate representatives. Another said that 25 representatives will result in an overly large task force. Delegates agreed to a task force that comprises: two Bureau members; three MEP members covering the five UN regions; and 20 additional experts. This text was also used for the membership composition of the other task forces.

On the task force on knowledge and data, one delegate proposed, and others agreed, to state the need for catalyzing the generation of new knowledge and data. On the task force for indigenous and local knowledge, one developed country proposed, and delegates agreed to, facilitating indigenous and local knowledge inputs, saying that this feeds into other deliverables. The ToR for the three task forces were agreed on, as amended.

In the afternoon, delegates addressed the scoping study on the fast track assessment on pollination and pollinators associated with food production that included suggestions provided during Thursday’s discussions. Delegates provided additional recommendations: including that the assessment be summarized not only for policy, but also for decision-makers; and integrating references to strategic partnerships. Noting that the scope of the assessment had been notably expanded, some delegates stressed the need to adjust the assessment’s proposed schedule. MEP Co-Chair Joly emphasized the time challenges that a broader scope implied. Delegates agreed to the text of the scoping study, acknowledging that in the future it may be necessary to adjust its outline and revisit its timeline.

Delegates then turned to consider the scoping study on the assessment of scenarios and modeling of biodiversity and ecosystem services. Additional recommendations included: focusing on participatory methods to bridge the assessment’s outcomes with the public policy process; and considering not only global and regional, but also “national” environmental assessment modeling experiences.

Delegates afterwards addressed the scoping study on the assessment of value, valuation and accounting of biodiversity and ecosystem services. Proposals included broadening the scope and rationale of the assessment, and there was considerable support for incorporating different views of biodiversity and nature value approaches. Co-Chair Baste noted that the timing to launch this assessment is key, as it is intended to provide guidance to the other assessments. One delegate proposed, and delegates eventually agreed to, a two-step approach comprising: elaboration of guidance for the other assessments; and further developing the foundation for the full fast track assessment at a later stage. Delegates also discussed whether the assessment to be performed as part of the second step would be a “fast track” or a thematic assessment, and decided to further consider the issue pending definition of “fast track.”

On regional/subregional assessments, delegates agreed that the Platform prepare a set of such assessments through a regionally-based scoping process. References to procedural issues concerning the scoping process were deleted, since they are already set out in the rules of procedure. All remaining brackets were lifted from the document.

Delegates then considered a draft decision on the work programme for the period 2014–2018. They agreed to establish task forces on: indigenous and local knowledge systems for the period of the work programme to be led by the MEP; and



capacity-building for the same period led by the Bureau, in consultation with the MEP. Members also suggested referencing “knowledge foundation” instead of “knowledge generation” and including “participatory mechanisms” in addition to a roster and network of experts that work with various knowledge systems. On regional and subregional assessments, delegates emphasized capacity building and the possible engagement of regional and national centers of excellence.

RULES AND PROCEDURES: Delegates continued to review MEP membership issues in the rules of procedure. Discussion focused on three options for the nomination process of MEP members. Option one provided that all nominations go through governments; option two mirrors the IPCC, with nominations from both members and stakeholders; and option three would reserve a specific percentage of nominations for governments, with the rest open to observers. Developing country participants widely supported option one; several developed countries urged providing an opportunity to all stakeholders to nominate experts to facilitate the best selection of MEP members. Interested delegations convened in a small group and produced a compromise solution that was agreed to by the contact group. Key elements of the compromise include that: both governments and “relevant stakeholders” will be involved in the nomination of experts; the MEP will select experts from the lists of nominations prepared by the Secretariat and select no more than 20% of experts nominated by “relevant stakeholders”; and only governments will select MEP members. “Relevant stakeholders” are defined to include experts in indigenous and local knowledge and in disciplines related to the work of IPBES.

Delegates then reviewed a draft decision on the MEP (IPBES/2/CRP.7), which was approved with minor amendments.

Delegates also finalized text on the procedures for preparing standard assessments, and moved on to fast track assessment procedures. One participant objected to the notion of fast track assessments, stressing that the quality of the Platform’s products could be compromised. Others said that a process for fast track assessments is needed, noting that IPBES-2 is expected to launch one such assessment of pollination in the near future. As a compromise, one delegate proposed that two reviews could be undertaken to ensure the quality of fast track assessments. A MEP member said that conducting two thorough reviews in a short period of time is perhaps unfeasible, and proposed that a higher number of reviewers could be engaged in an intense, single round of reviews. This proposal received considerable support. The discussion continued into the night.

PLENARY

REPORT ON CREDENTIALS: Masa Nagai, UNEP Legal Officer, announced that 76 members have submitted their credentials and are thus able to fully take part in the decisions and workings of IPBES-2.

REPORT FROM THE CONTACT GROUPS: Co-Chair Watson reported that the contact group had finalized a draft decision on how to elect, nominate and select future MEP members, which was ready for consideration by the Plenary. He said the group still needed to finalize the procedure for the preparation of assessments, noting that good progress had been made regarding the roles of the Bureau and the MEP, and the role of observers in nominating experts for consideration in the scoping and preparation of assessment documents.

Co-Chair Baste reported back on the progress of the contact group on the programme of work, saying that agreement has been reached on, *inter alia*: the conceptual framework and the ToR for task forces on capacity building, knowledge and data, and indigenous and local knowledge.

Budget contact group Co-Chair Spencer Thomas said that pledges announced matched the proposals for the biennium for approximately US\$20 million.

ADOPTION OF DECISIONS: Delegates then adopted a draft decision on the work programme’s conceptual framework (IPBES/2/CRP.3/Rev.1). Following a proposal from JAPAN to include a reference to welcome contributions that “will be” provided, delegates adopted a draft decision on financial and budgetary arrangements (IPBES/2/CRP.8/Rev.1).

UNEP announced that the process for appointing the new IPBES Executive Secretary had been concluded and that Anne Larigauderie had been appointed to the position.

European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy, for STAKEHOLDERS, welcomed members’ commitment to ensure inclusive and transparent consultations at the national level and called for adoption of open and transparent scoping assessments and review processes.

Chair Zakri welcomed the progress made and said that Plenary would reconvene on Saturday afternoon.

IN THE CORRIDORS

The penultimate day of IPBES-2 convened as delegates gathered in a very “constructive spirit” in the three contact groups. The rules of procedure contact group made “a major step forward” on the nomination and selection of MEP members. Some said Chair Zakri’s intervention was key to convincing delegates that there was a need to open up the possibility for observer nominations. “This will clearly facilitate the involvement of the developing world’s academies of science and reflect the spirit of IPBES,” said a satisfied stakeholder participant. During the evening’s plenary, Robert Watson went so far as to refer to this agreement, together with progress on the role of observers in nominating experts for assessments, as a key “breakthrough” for IPBES to start implementing its work programme.

During the work programme discussions, delegates started facing some of the new challenges arising from bringing science and policy together. When addressing the scoping studies prepared by the MEP for the assessments, most predicted that the resulting discussions would have a “scientific tune.” Instead, they found themselves entering, what was termed by some, as “almost” political negotiations to make sure that their national concerns are taken into account *vis-à-vis* the regional balance of experts and the scope of the assessments. This “clash” brings to light the ever tricky issue of drawing a line between the need for political oversight and scientific independence, “a line that will need to be defined to ensure IPBES’ scientific credibility,” one participant said.

ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS: The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of IPBES-2 will be available on Tuesday, 17 December 2013 online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/ipbes/ipbes2/>