



IPBES-4 HIGHLIGHTS: SATURDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2016

IPBES-4 delegates met in two contact groups in the morning, afternoon and into the evening. Plenary convened briefly in the early afternoon to take stock of progress.

Contact Group I considered the scoping reports for a methodological assessment on diverse conceptualization of multiple values of nature and its benefits, and a thematic assessment on invasive alien species (IAS) and their control.

Contact Group II concluded the negotiation of the summary for policy makers (SPM) of the methodological assessment of scenarios and models of biodiversity and ecosystem services, and discussed proposed future work on scenarios and modeling and the review of the Platform.

The Budget group met at lunch time and in the evening.

Work in all groups continued into the night.

CONTACT GROUP I

MULTIPLE VALUES OF NATURE AND ITS

BENEFITS: Unai Pascual, MEP, presented the scoping report (IPBES/4/9), noting the assessment’s rationale to evaluate: strengths and weaknesses of various methodologies; existing data on multiple values; and their degree of confidence. He explained that the preliminary guide (IPBES/4/INF/13): focuses on why, and what kind of, valuation is necessary; identifies methodologies to bridge the diversity of values; and leads to the question on how to make them operational. Marie Stenske, MEP, stressed the need to invite the social sciences and humanities to engage with IPBES.

SWITZERLAND emphasized the assessment’s value for the quality and credibility of IPBES’ deliverables. ETHIOPIA noted it would inform local and regional decision-making. NEW ZEALAND noted the need for a practical tool or method to evaluate non-monetary values. CANADA emphasized the need for an analysis of trade-offs.

Many highlighted links or synergies with other assessments. AUSTRALIA and NORWAY suggested linking the assessment to the work of the ILK Task Force. The UK emphasized budget constraints. GERMANY proposed postponing the assessment until other assessments are well advanced.

In several instances, delegates improved the assessment rationale by replacing specific references with more broad references, including more general references to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and management of ecosystems. However, delegates decided to retain a list detailing different disciplines from which the group of experts may come.

Regarding the chapter outline, on chapter two (coverage of diverse conceptualizations of value), FRANCE asked for reference to values in situations of uncertainties and risks of catastrophic events. DENMARK suggested adding reference to international initiatives on incorporating ecosystem accounts into national accounts, with NORWAY adding reference to relevant standards.

On Chapter three (valuation methodologies), NEW ZEALAND asked to address “conflicts and synergies” along with trade-offs among different valuations. On chapter five (gaps), the US requested deleting reference to “fairness and equity” implications, noting this was policy prescriptive.

On Chapter six (capacity-building needs), SWITZERLAND asked to also consider opportunities for policy uptake, development and implementation. ETHIOPIA and the US cautioned against losing the focus on capacity-building needs, and delegates decided to consider whether opportunities can be addressed in Chapter four.

INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES: Delegates discussed the scoping for a thematic assessment of IAS and their control (IPBES/4/10). The US suggested focusing the assessment on priority cross-cutting issues, such as IAS and climate change. BRAZIL called for broader incorporation of ILK. NIGERIA emphasized IAS in coastal regions. AUSTRALIA asked to also include positive impacts and opportunities through IAS. JAPAN and CANADA favored focus on control measures and management options.

SWEDEN raised concerns about citing the definition used by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), noting inconsistent definitions in CBD decisions and focus on human-introduced IAS. The US favored a broader discussion on the use of definitions suggesting using IUCN definitions instead.

AUSTRIA, CHINA, FRANCE and BHUTAN preferred definitions of IAS from both the CBD and IUCN. The US opposed using the CBD definition or any other politically negotiated definition.

Participants made slow progress on the chapter outline. Many agreed with the US to build on existing assessments and focus on policy response options.

On Chapter two (scope), delegates agreed it would: provide an analysis and synthesis of previously completed IAS assessments and regional IPBES assessments; synthesize past and future trends of the spread, pathways, evolutionary change and distribution of IAS; and identify knowledge gaps.

On Chapter three (drivers), delegates decided to delete a list of direct and indirect drivers responsible for IAS. Delegates then discussed whether to refer to “drivers of IAS” or drivers of “change in IAS.” SWITZERLAND proposed “drivers



responsible for introduction, spread and impacts of IAS.” SWEDEN suggested “drivers of abundance of IAS.” JAPAN proposed “drivers of change”; and SWITZERLAND drivers of IAS “dynamics.” ETHIOPIA felt the list of classes of drivers was too limiting. SWITZERLAND suggested referring to drivers of, “*inter alia*: introduction, spread and dynamics of IAS,” to which delegates agreed.

CONTACT GROUP II

ASSESSMENT OF SCENARIOS AND MODELING:

Delegates continued deliberation on outstanding issues on key findings in the SPM. They agreed on text to incorporate the relationship between modeling in correlative, process-based and expert-based approaches. They also considered a new box provided to incorporate ILK into models, aiming to inform decision-makers, with an example on how indigenous management of species has contributed to an increase in abundance and therefore to change in conservation status of the Caimen crocodile in Bolivia.

Delegates also considered revised text providing guidance points on the importance of effective model and scenario use, and thus their policy relevance. Regarding encouraging multi-scaled scenarios, many noted the need to elaborate linkages with ongoing deliverables, but also on how IPBES should work with scientific communities to address a number of issues, and integration with all other assessments. Some participants expressed concern that the negative tone of some of the key guidance points may lead to policy makers not realizing the benefit of scenarios and models.

The contact group considered the terms of reference (ToR) contained in the annex of the proposal on the further development of tools and methodologies regarding scenarios and models (IPBES/4/5). They revised text on: catalyzing the development of scenarios and associated models by the broader scientific community; and on the institutional arrangements for undertaking work on scenarios and models.

On the work schedule, participants expressed concern that there may be insufficient budgetary resources for all of the future work listed, with some noting that they may have to wait for the budget group to finalize their discussions.

Delegates considered the MEP’s revised work schedule indicating which activities are supported through the pledged in-kind support by the Netherlands, and pending activities for which support is to be requested in cash from the Trust Fund.

On cost estimates, some called for separation of what has already been offered and what is yet to be requested from the Trust Fund. One also called for synergies, such as back-to-back meetings that can lead to cost savings. Participants retained the schedule and budget in brackets. They also proposed minor text revisions to the decision on methodological assessments on the draft IPBES-4 report.

REVIEW OF THE PLATFORM: The contact group deliberated on a non-paper containing the ToR for a review of the effectiveness of the Platform’s administrative and scientific functions. The EU IPBES MEMBERS said the internal review should be the basis of the final review. The US, CANADA and NEW ZEALAND favored a single final review. CANADA further said that the final review should be carried out at the end of the first or the beginning of the second work programme. SWITZERLAND said there should be alternative mechanisms for review of the Platform.

Marie Stenseke, MEP representative, stressed that even though IPBES is “young,” a first internal review is necessary. The final review, she added, would enable the assessment of IPBES’ overall impact in fulfilling its goals.

CANADA, supported by BRAZIL, said the review should assess the impact of the work programme after the latter’s conclusion. The US proposed discussing an external review at IPBES-5, noting “little appetite” for an internal mid-term review.

SWITZERLAND proposed alternative decision text, *inter alia*: inviting governments and stakeholders to provide views on potential elements for the review; and requesting the MEP, in consultation with the Bureau, to consider these elements and to report to IPBES-5.

The US and CANADA supported the “general direction” of the proposal. The EU IPBES MEMBERS expressed concern, cautioning against “losing” the work that has already been undertaken.

Co-Chair Baste suggested text: requesting the MEP, in consultation with the Bureau, to develop a procedure for the review; inviting governments and stakeholders to provide views on the potential elements for the review; and requesting the MEP, in consultation with the Bureau, to consider these elements and to report to IPBES-5.

The EU IPBES MEMBERS suggested that governments and stakeholders further provide views on the draft ToR as contained in the annex. The US called for referencing “an independent external final review.” The EU IPBES MEMBERS opposed including “final.” The US suggested, and the EU IPBES MEMBERS agreed, to replace the phrase “independent external review” with “end-of-work-programme review.”

The US also suggested that the MEP, in consultation with the Bureau “further refine the scope and ToR of the end-of-work-programme review, in light of the aforementioned inputs, for consideration by” IPBES-5, to which delegates agreed.

After some discussion, delegates agreed to bracket the ToR text, annex it to the decision and change the title to reflect that it is a draft.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Over the course of Saturday, the enthusiasm over IPBES’ successful release of the pollination assessment report and summary for policy makers waned as fatigue became ever more evident among delegates. Co-Chairs labored hard to avert the constant threat of “over-bracketing” of uncontroversial text. One delegate said: “word games on trivialities such as whether we should refer to drivers of ‘change’ or drivers of ‘dynamics’ should not be entertained for hours in this setting.”

Stakeholder’s eagerness to participate was also in decline, as witnessed in the contact group where some debated “should I stay or should I go.” One delegation frankly remarked, “seven day meetings are humanly unsustainable.” Others expressed frustration over parallel and late-night sessions, barring their anticipated Malaysian sightseeing beyond the Petronas Towers.

Yet commitment to IPBES’ endeavor remained high. Noting the political momentum generated by the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, one delegate explained, “IPBES’ work should now be communicated to the High-level Political Forum.” Other thematic experts noted the value of exchange and networking for informing the process as well as for sharing the workload.

Whether fatigued or hopeful, most participants who left the Convention Center late Saturday night understood that budget limitations require creative thinking. One delegate said: “While a budget shortfall warrants re-thinking priorities, it won’t alter our determination!”

ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS: The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of IPBES-4 will be available on Wednesday, 2 March 2016, online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/ipbes/ipbes4/>