



IPBES-3 HIGHLIGHTS:

WEDNESDAY, 14 JANUARY 2015

IPBES-3 reconvened on Wednesday, 14 January 2015, in Bonn, Germany. Delegates initially convened in plenary to discuss the communication and stakeholder strategies, guidance on strategic partnerships and the institutional arrangements for the UN collaborative partnership arrangements for the Platform. Contact groups on budget, the work programme, communication and stakeholder strategies and rules of procedure met for the remainder of the day. Plenary reconvened briefly in the evening to hear updates on progress.

PLENARY

COMMUNICATIONS AND STAKEHOLDER

ENGAGEMENT: Communications and outreach and stakeholder engagement strategies: On the stakeholder engagement strategy, FRANCE: suggested an outreach policy to reach relevant stakeholders; supported, with INDIA, the stakeholder engagement strategy's adoption; and, with the REPUBLIC OF KOREA, preferred that the stakeholder engagement strategy is overseen by an inclusive, open-ended forum of stakeholders.

On communication, NEW ZEALAND suggested considering a "summary for citizens." BELGIUM sought clarification on the target audience, outreach activities and the evaluation process. INDIA stressed communication be policy relevant and not policy prescriptive. Stakeholders proposed establishing a stakeholder engagement unit. A contact group co-chaired by Leonel Sierralta (Chile) and Fundisile Mketeni (South Africa) was established.

Guidance on strategic partnerships: The Secretariat introduced IPBES/3/17. The US said that most activities in the work programme could be performed without formal partnerships and called for considering specific mandates of any partners. Chair Zakri noted that the draft guidance will be revised.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS: UN COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE WORK OF THE PLATFORM AND ITS SECRETARIAT:

The Secretariat introduced IPBES/3/INF/14. Salvatore Aricò, UNESCO, speaking on behalf of UNEP, FAO, UNESCO and UNDP — the four agencies involved in the UN collaborative partnership arrangements for the Platform — noted that the institutional arrangements have been approved and the agreement is ready to "be fully operationalized." He noted several IPBES-relevant initiatives underway, including UNEP's Live Knowledge Platform and UNESCO's Future

Earth Initiative as well as activities, such as: FAO's hosting of the Global Soil Partnership secretariat and facilitating the implementation of its actions; the UNDP's contribution to the formalization of BES-Net; and the incorporation of IPBES-relevant decisions in preparations for UNEP's Global Environment Outlook and CBD's upcoming Global Biodiversity Outlook.

JAPAN highlighted its support of scenario building work with UNESCO and looked forward to increased synergies with relevant MEAs.

CONTACT GROUP REPORTS TO PLENARY: Rules of procedure: Co-Chair Watson reported "amazing" progress on the group's first reading of the text on procedures for the preparation Platform deliverables, and said members would commence work on conflict of interest and IPBES review procedures in the afternoon.

Work programme: Co-Chair Baste said the group had carried out an initial stocktaking and agreed to use, as a starting point, the alternative proposal prepared by the IPBES Bureau and MEP, which proposes integrating thematic, global and regional assessments. He said small drafting groups had also begun work on the data and information management plan and capacity building.

Budget: Co-Chair Sierralta said the group had commenced work on two texts: a review of the status of cash and in-kind contributions to the Platform in 2014; and a non-paper providing budget information per deliverable for option one of the IPBES work programme for 2015-18. He said the group would continue to work closely with the work programme contact group.

Closing the session, Chair Zakri clarified that the contact group on the communication and outreach strategy would also consider the stakeholder engagement strategy.

CONTACT GROUPS

WORK PROGRAMME: During the morning contact group, delegates heard a presentation on possible options for coupling thematic, regional and global assessments, and discussed a timeline of "anticipated" actions to be taken by IPBES. Discussions focused on: management structure to ensure consistency across assessments; importance of integrity of information; inclusion of local and indigenous peoples' views and knowledge; and addressing global issues including, trade and globalization, open oceans, linkages to work in other fora, such as the Aichi Targets under the CBD, and the work on the post-2015 development agenda. Delegates exchanged ideas, including: establishing indicators for the global assessment; considering that while coupling may be sensible from a scientific



view point, alignment of thematic assessments with sector-specific policy needs is important; establishing an expert team focusing on conceptual coherence; and considering efficiency gains of joint meetings to allow the Secretariat's capacity to focus on "steering the process."

After lunch, delegates continued "sharing reflections on coupling assessments" with members of the MEP providing "preliminary responses" to questions on an envisaged procedure for scoping work and the establishment of a global coordination group. Some delegates expressed preference for independent, standalone thematic assessments over their integration into regional assessments. Another called for "less simplistic" consideration of ILK integration into the work programme, noting financial and capacity-building implications.

BUDGET: On Wednesday morning, the contact group first completed consideration of the Bureau non-paper on financial procedures and rules. Co-Chair Sierralta then invited members to discuss revised text on the status of cash and in-kind contributions. With regard to 2014 expenditures, members requested clarification on, *inter alia*: country contributions not reflected on the list; costs of hosting IPBES-3; and total savings accrued during the year. On the proposed revised budget for 2015, members queried, *inter alia*, projected travel costs and the rationale for new staff recruitments. Responding to the issues raised, the Secretariat highlighted: the high cost of the interim hosting arrangements; the heavy workload; and the difficulty of building a new institutional structure without a dedicated core staff. The group also began consideration of the non-paper containing budget information per deliverable for option one of the work programme for 2015-18.

RULES OF PROCEDURE: The contact group continued its discussions on procedures for the preparation of Platform deliverables. On addressing possible errors and complaints, participants agreed to limit the procedure to a single process for error correction only. On scoping, participants agreed to delete the relevant annex, while drawing from it to expand on elements to include in the scoping process. The group also agreed to delete an annexed flowchart of the scoping to deliverables process. On Platform workshops, participants discussed the funding of experts from developing countries and countries with economies in transition as well as indigenous and local knowledge holders, noting that resolution on the question would depend on the outcome of plenary discussions on funding of expert participation. The contact group also discussed the deletion of an annexed summary schedule for deliverables under standard and fast-track approaches. Contact group Co-Chairs Watson, Barudanovic and Lonsdale then introduced proposed text, to be considered Thursday, for the annex on the procedure on the use of literature in Platform reports.

COMMUNICATION AND STAKEHOLDER

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY: The contact group met over lunch. Participants agreed on the communication strategy. On the stakeholder engagement strategy, participants addressed options for managing the strategy, with many favoring the second option of having an inclusive, open-ended stakeholder forum. Some initially opposed, expressing concern about the budget. Following further discussion, most favored option two. Delegates also considered the issue of identification of stakeholders, with some discussing the possibility of an identification process.

CONTACT GROUP CHAIRS' EVENING BRIEFING

WORK PROGRAMME: Co-Chair Baste said the group had finalized an exchange of views on coupling global, regional and subregional assessments, and forwarded its proposals to

the MEP and Bureau for further clarification. He said members would resume their reading of the chapter outline of the generic scoping document for regional assessments in the evening, following the drafting approach adopted in Antalya. He also reported that a joint session with the budget group might take place in the evening to discuss the cost implications of the various options under consideration.

BUDGET: Co-Chair Sierralta said the group had reviewed the 2015 budget proposals on all items not related to the work programme and the Bureau had finalized a revision of the non-paper on contributions based on the group's input, to enable further consultations with capitals. He said discussion of the non-paper on budget information per deliverable for option one of the work programme for 2015-2018 would resume on Thursday.

RULES OF PROCEDURE: Co-Chair Watson reported that the group had nearly completed its work on the procedure for deliverables, noting that the only outstanding issues were an annex on grey literature and provisions related to the funding of workshops. He explained the latter depends only on resolution on the question of funding of experts. He explained the annex to the document on ILK cannot be considered until the Task Force on ILK completes its work. He noted the group would consider conflict of interest and the Platform's evaluation on Thursday. Watson said that if no agreement on acceptance of observers can be reached at IPBES-3, the group will need to agree on an interim procedure for IPBES-4.

COMMUNICATION AND STAKEHOLDER

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES: Co-Chair Mketeni said the group had finalized work on the communication strategy and that work on the stakeholder engagement strategies had progressed well. Noting the general preference for an open-ended stakeholder forum, he said outstanding issues include how to manage the implementation of the strategy through an open forum, and what IPBES' oversight role will be.

IN THE CORRIDORS

What's in a name? Three days into IPBES-3 many delegates continue to show a lot of creativity in pronouncing the acronym of their Platform, variously referring to it as I-P-B-E-S, eep-bes, eep-bees, I-P-bees, I-P bes and I-P-B-S.

Besides these phonetical challenges, some delegates were heard voicing their concern about diverging views expressed throughout the day on whether to place the emphasis on the "science" or the "policy" component of the Platform. In thinking on the Platform's way forward, they reflected not only on lessons learned from the IPCC but also on how to balance inputs from, and the needs of, the different science, policy and knowledge communities. Fittingly, work programme contact group Co-Chair Alfred Oteng-Yeboah invited members to envision a bold path, guided by "a heart that wishes IPBES to survive."

Elsewhere, more serious undertones began to emerge. The concern that some of the experts involved in the fast-track assessment on pollinators, pollination and food production may have a conflict of interest as a result of industry links, seems to have filtered through into discussion on values. And while some said that industry linkages will help incorporate the widest possible range of knowledge and views, others cautioned that with IPBES struggling to fund participation of experts, those with the "deepest pockets" have an opportunity to undermine the scientific independence of planned assessments. Heading into the stock-taking plenary, one delegate was heard commenting that the most practical solution is probably to ensure full transparency so that such concerns can be brought to the fore.