



IPBES-3 HIGHLIGHTS: FRIDAY, 16 JANUARY 2015

IPBES-3 convened on Friday, 16 January 2015, to continue its deliberations. In the morning, discussions in the contact groups on the work programme and the communications and stakeholder engagement strategies resumed. Over lunch, the contact group on the budget met. In the afternoon, participants attended a stock-taking plenary, following which the contact groups on the work programme, rules of procedure, and the communications and stakeholder engagement strategies continued.

In the evening, the contact groups on the rules of procedure, the work programme and budget took place.

CONTACT GROUPS

WORK PROGRAMME: Task Forces on Capacity-Building, Knowledge and Data, and ILK Systems: Luthando Dziba, Knowledge and Data Task Force Member, South Africa, provided an overview of revisions relating to the draft data and information management plan (IPBES/3/4). Members agreed to most of the revised text, with some adjustments, but could not reach consensus on text calling for the application of prior and informed consent principles to information derived from ILK holders. The draft text was forwarded to the Plenary with brackets around this language.

Scoping Documents for Land Degradation and Restoration and the Conceptualization of Values Thematic Assessments: Delegates completed reading the revised scoping document for the thematic assessment of land degradation and restoration, making additional changes, including: to include under scope “natural regeneration and emerging ecosystems”; to change a reference from “mining” to “extractive industries”; and to replace a specific reference to particular SDGs with a broader reference to the “ongoing process for developing a post-2015 development agenda.”

The Secretariat presented a revised timeline and estimated cost implications that follow from aligning the thematic assessment with regional assessments, including joint meetings and extending one technical support staff position for 2017.

Draft generic scoping report for the regional and subregional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services: The contact group considered revisions to the draft report (IPBES/3/6/Add.1 and IPBES/3/6/Add. 2-6). Paul Leadley, MEP member, said changes included, *inter alia*: checking that language across the document is consistent with the conceptual

framework and Platform’s rules of procedure; mentioning that the summary for policy makers should be disseminated to a broader audience; and listing examples of partners that can mobilize knowledge and data. In discussions, members emphasized the need for regional assessments to explore “how biodiversity and ecosystem services and functions contribute to the economy, livelihoods, food security and good quality of life, and the interdependencies among them.”

In the evening, delegates deleted a reference to “extraterritorial” in a still-bracketed section on the geographic boundary of the assessment. Other changes included clarifying: the facilitative role of the Platform in collecting and archiving information; that “data and information should be available for future IPBES work”; that experts could take into account “species listed at national level where relevant”; and that consideration will be given to how institutional and governance arrangements contribute to changes in biodiversity ecosystem services and functions.

Timetable for conducting thematic and regional assessments: In the afternoon, Paul Leadley presented a timetable for conducting the assessments prepared by the Bureau and MEP, noting it, among others: ensures a coherent methodological approach; respects the scoping procedure that was laid out in Antalya; avoids a heavy workload for the Secretariat and experts in 2015; maintains momentum on the fast-track assessments; and facilitates an iterative learning process among the different assessments. He explained the proposed timetable will ensure completion of all the deliverables agreed at IPBES-2, including finalizing the global assessment in time to feed into the review of the Aichi Targets. Leadley then presented a note from the Bureau on the proposed coupling approach that will be submitted to the Plenary for approval.

Many members welcomed the proposed timetable, but raised issues regarding, *inter alia*: ensuring a competitive process for identifying experts; enhancing the quality of the two remaining scoping documents; and managing the heavy workload at IPBES-6. Several members emphasized the need to launch ILK pilots in the four regions in 2015 to ensure local information is incorporated in the assessments.

Indigenous and Local Knowledge Systems: ILK Task Force Co-Chairs Phil Lyver (New Zealand) and Edgar Perez (Guatemala) informed delegates of the 2014 Global Dialogue Workshop on ILK and Pollination in Panama, and outlined the



proposed piloting of preliminary procedures and approaches. Responding to a delegate's question, Perez confirmed the need to begin the piloting process.

RULES OF PROCEDURE: Conflict of Interest: The contact group met in the afternoon to conclude its consideration of this item. They agreed to set aside, pending completion of their review, a proposal discussed by the group on Thursday evening, allowing for members and observers to send a "duly reasoned request" to the conflict of interest (COI) committee for it to examine a potential conflict of interest of any expert involved in the work of the Platform. The group then discussed, and agreed on, the composition of the committee. Concerns raised included: workload manageability, number of members, and differentiation from Bureau membership, regional balance, and potential involvement by UNEP, UNDP, FAO and UNESCO. Agreement was reached that the committee would, in addition to implementing the agreed rules, also determine COI cases referred to it by the IPBES Bureau. The group also discussed how to implement the review of potential conflicts of interest among TSU employees. Participants briefly discussed a proposal that IPBES follow the IPCC model of establishing a COI advisory group to advise the committee in contentious cases and agreed its establishment might be considered at a later date.

In the evening, the group completed its consideration of the draft COI policy and procedures, including the appended disclosure form. The contact group then completed its review of the progress report on developing a procedure for reviewing the effectiveness of the Platform's administrative and scientific functions (IPBES/3/INF/11).

COMMUNICATIONS AND STAKEHOLDER

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES: Communications and Outreach Strategy: The group considered draft text calling on, *inter alia*, the Secretariat to work, in conjunction with a communications firm and the capacity-building task force, to develop and implement training programmes. Some expressed concern regarding available resources. Others suggested referencing "capacity building" rather than "training programmes." The text was accepted with minor amendments. The group agreed to forward the decision to the Plenary, with a bracket remaining on whether to "note" or "welcome" the strategy.

Stakeholder Engagement Strategy: The contact group considered new compromise text outlining the oversight mechanism. Some parties expressed concern that the text implied formal input into the forum from the Secretariat. Others queried the legal status of the forum. Some delegates said they were unable to accept the compromise text. They were also unable to accept deleting references to eligibility criteria. Delegates agreed to form a small group to resolve the issue.

In the afternoon, new compromise text was introduced stating that: the Secretariat implements and operationalizes the strategy, "under the supervision of the Bureau and Plenary, and in collaboration with the MEP"; the Platform encourages the self-organization of an inclusive, open-ended forum of stakeholders; collaboration between the Platform and the forum will be guided by the strategy; and a strategic partnership between the Platform and the forum will specify the collaboration arrangements, subject to approval of the Plenary.

Members noted that while the proposed text was generally agreeable, it still did not address eligibility criteria concerns that had been raised, which include diversity and equal opportunity. One delegate suggested that the definition of stakeholders

be addressed as it currently includes governments. Delegates proposed limiting the definition to types of contributors and end-users that would make up the stakeholder group.

One delegate stated that the strategy should have been focused on, as opposed to the oversight mechanism, proposing the issue be addressed at IPBES-4. Delegates agreed to further consider the issue in a small group.

PLENARY

CONTACT GROUP REPORTS TO PLENARY: Work Programme: Co-Chair Baste described the contact group on the work programme as "proceeding with good spirit." He reported: under capacity building, agreement on key priority needs and few issues left to consider; on knowledge foundation, near agreement, with the exception of a minor clause in the data and information management plan; and on thematic assessments, agreement on the land degradation and restoration scoping document, with pending discussions on the coupling of assessments. He noted the group is also progressing its consideration of regional and sub-regional assessments, the catalogue of assessments, and policy support tools and methodologies.

Rules of Procedure: COI: Contact group Co-Chair Watson noted the group had made good progress and identified important principles and philosophical issues. He said that he is optimistic the group would complete its work by the evening.

Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Strategies: Co-Chair Mketeni noted hindrances to agreement on the stakeholder engagement strategy, including issues of national interest and the legal nature of the bodies involved.

Budget: Co-Chair Sierralta noted that the group had heard a presentation from the Secretariat on, *inter alia*, staff issues and the number of people currently employed. He said they had also heard a presentation on ODA issues. He stated that the group had started reviewing the decision and that "the numbers" will be discussed when the work programme is finalized.

CREDENTIALS OF REPRESENTATIVES: During the afternoon plenary, the Secretariat presented the draft credentials report. SAUDI ARABIA said that it has submitted its credentials to the Secretariat. Plenary approved the report.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Delegates came on Friday ready to resume discussions in the four contact groups and hoping to finish their work timeously. While the rules of procedure contact group was making progress like "a hot knife through soft butter on a warm evening," as one co-chair described it, others were less fortunate. Those with the daunting task of operationalizing the work programme toiled into the night. On the oversight mechanism for stakeholder engagement, although it seemed that new text would finally be agreeable to all, this was not to be, as some delegations felt that, despite much "wordsmithing," their concerns were still not being addressed. As some sleepy delegates headed back to their hotels, they could be heard saying that while there finally seems to be a new, late evening compromise on that issue, the test will be whether it survives the final plenary session.

ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS: The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of IPBES-3 will be available on Tuesday, 20 January 2015 online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/ipbes/ipbes3>