



IPBES Bulletin

A Daily Report of the Third *Ad Hoc* Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Meeting on an Intergovernmental Science-Policy Interface on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES III)
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IPBES III HIGHLIGHTS MONDAY, 7 JUNE 2010

The third *ad hoc* intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting on an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services (IPBES) opened on Monday in Busan, Republic of Korea. In the morning, delegates heard opening statements and began discussing whether to establish an IPBES. In the afternoon, delegates considered options for: strengthening the science-policy interface on biodiversity and ecosystem services; processes that a new platform should support; and function or work programme of the new platform.

OPENING OF THE MEETING

Achim Steiner, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Executive Director, identified two key roles for an IPBES: providing a platform for intense dialogue and collective action needed to achieve an urgent and significant shift in addressing biodiversity loss; and enhancing the capacity of developing countries to contribute to global efforts. Lee Maanee, Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea, summoned delegates to support the establishment of an IPBES, promising that in the future the international community will remember them as “the heroes of that moment.” Hur Nam-sik, Mayor of Busan, expressed the hope that this meeting would strengthen international cooperation on biodiversity.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Delegates elected Kim Chan-woo (Republic of Korea) as chair. Robert Watson (UK), Alfred Oteng Yeboah (Ghana), Linus Spencer Thomas (Grenada) were elected as vice-chairs by acclamation. The vice-chair nominee of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) will be announced on Tuesday. Delegates adopted the provisional agenda and organization of work (UNEP/IPBES/3/1).

CONSIDERATION OF WHETHER TO ESTABLISH AN IPBES

Ibrahim Thiaw, UNEP, introduced the document on the options for improving the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services (UNEP/IPBES/3/2).

GERMANY, on behalf of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) German presidency, highlighted that creating new mechanisms translates into new financial burdens but noted, with GABON, that a new platform is needed to facilitate better-informed decision-making. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA emphasized that an IPBES should not generate new knowledge but rather catalyze it. NORWAY stressed that an IPBES should provide a “common voice” like the one the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) provides for climate change. BRAZIL stressed that an IPBES should be multidisciplinary and support research through in-country capacity-building.

Supporting the establishment of a unique and authoritative scientific body, Spain, on behalf of the EUROPEAN UNION noted that several member states are committed to providing new and additional resources. She noted that an IPBES should meet the needs of governments, while taking into account inputs by other stakeholders, and catalyze capacity development. MEXICO underlined the need to take account of local and national level decision-making processes in a new global mechanism. KENYA expressed interest in establishing an IPBES that provides credible scientific information, builds capacity and integrates local indigenous and community knowledge into decision-making. ETHIOPIA, GAMBIA, South Africa, on behalf of the AFRICAN GROUP, GHANA and ISRAEL also expressed strong support for an IPBES. ETHIOPIA stated it could narrow the scientific and technical gaps between developed and developing countries.

JAPAN expressed support for the establishment of an IPBES, but cautioned that the IPCC could offer only a limited model for a new platform because biodiversity loss exhibits a much greater regional variation than climate change.

The UNITED STATES said that it would be difficult to decide whether or not to support the establishment of an IPBES until its scope and structure were better addressed. CHINA emphasized that developing countries lack capacity, and this must be considered and resolved. She supported strengthening existing mechanisms. With IRAN and AUSTRALIA she cautioned against duplication of work between mechanisms. IRAN also urged that an IPBES complement the work of the CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA).

NEW ZEALAND stressed that post-2010 biodiversity targets would be difficult to meet without credible, simple, and standardized scientific measurements. YEMEN, ANTIGUA and BARBUDA and the European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy (EPBRs) underlined the importance of scientific independence of an IPBES. GRENADA emphasized the role of an IPBES in improving science and reversing disturbing trends.

CBD, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), expressed support for the establishment of an IPBES, with UNESCO highlighting his willingness to work in synergy with it. The Korean Business Council for Sustainable Development, for the World Business Council For Sustainable Development, supported by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), said a credible multi-stakeholder platform would foster sustainable business practices and expand markets for ecosystem services. DIVERSITAS, on behalf of the

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International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP) and the International Council for Science (ICSU), endorsed the establishment of a credible body to strengthen the science-policy interface. Supporting the new platform, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) stressed that an IPBES would facilitate ongoing scientific cooperation among Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEA) subsidiary bodies and specialized UN agencies and enhance capacity to monitor biodiversity loss.

HOW TO STRENGTHEN THE SCIENCE-POLICY INTERFACE ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES: Delegates discussed three different options: to create a new intergovernmental platform that would not duplicate or substitute the mandates or programmes of work of existing MEAs or UN bodies; to focus solely on strengthening existing science-policy structures of MEAs and UN bodies; or to create a new intergovernmental platform that would not duplicate or substitute the mandates or programmes of work of existing MEAs or UN bodies, and to work to strengthen, and improve coordination between, those existing structures.

JAPAN, REPUBLIC OF KOREA, and NORWAY said that they were willing to support either option one or option three, although JAPAN described the difference between the two options as unclear. SWITZERLAND, ICSU, and the EU also supported options one and three but favored the latter. MEXICO, SOUTH AFRICA, BRAZIL and IRAN endorsed option three, while GRENADA said that he leaned towards option three but was open to other considerations.

BRAZIL, supported by ARGENTINA, qualified his support, stating that in the spirit of consensus building the discussion should progress slowly and that all parties should have the opportunity to declare their preference. The US and CHINA reiterated BRAZIL's caution and said that they could not endorse a position until the scope, structure and function of an IPBES were clarified. COLOMBIA echoed BRAZIL and the US, saying that it tentatively preferred option three but required more information before taking a firm position. CHINA stressed that if a new mechanism is established, it should be a gradual process to avoid the mistakes of existing mechanisms. MEXICO and SOUTH AFRICA emphasized that an IPBES should not duplicate existing structures. BANGLADESH expressed preference for option one.

PROCESSES THAT A NEW PLATFORM, IF ESTABLISHED, SHOULD SUPPORT: Delegates considered four options, wherein an IPBES would respond to requests from governments conveyed through: CBD; the six biodiversity-related conventions; MEAs; or MEAs, in addition to requests from all relevant stakeholders, such as international scientific organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

MEXICO, SOUTH AFRICA, GRENADA, NORWAY, COTE D'IVOIRE and JAPAN expressed preference for option four. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA expressed preference for options three or four. AUSTRALIA preferred options two or three. The EU and SWITZERLAND endorsed option four with amendments to who will generate requests. DIVERSITAS, ICSU and IHDP supported option four, noting it would address major actors and also "broaden the net," with IUCN echoing that. BRAZIL, stressing the serious budgetary consequences of option four, preferred option one or two. IRAN cautioned against broadening the mandate and functions due to budget constraints and the complexities of a large number of stakeholders, and supported option one. INDONESIA and

ARGENTINA expressed support for options one or two. CHINA clarified that at the beginning, an IPBES should have a limited mandate and channel requests of national governments through CBD, with the option of gradually broadening its scope.

FUNCTION OR WORK PROGRAMME OF THE NEW PLATFORM, IF THE LATTER IS ESTABLISHED: Delegates reviewed the generation of knowledge and regular and timely assessments.

Generation of knowledge: Delegates discussed four options, wherein an IPBES: identifies and prioritizes key scientific information but does not undertake work to generate new knowledge; identifies and prioritizes key scientific information and facilitates dialogue to catalyze efforts to generate new knowledge, but would not directly undertake work to generate new knowledge; or would play no active role in knowledge generation.

The US asked where "peer-review" would fit. Vice-chair Watson said that peer-review would be addressed at the first meeting of an IPBES, if established. ARGENTINA queried what criteria would be used to ensure a regionally-balanced participation of parties. JAPAN expressed preference for option one. MEXICO, GRENADA, SOUTH AFRICA, DIVERSITAS, ICSU and IHDP supported option two.

NORWAY and the REPUBLIC OF KOREA favored option one but were open to option two. The EU, CHINA, URUGUAY, the REPUBLIC OF KOREA, IRAN, and BRAZIL urged that an IPBES not generate new knowledge, with URUGUAY noting this was both expensive and specific to academic institutions. URUGUAY, supported by IRAN, stated that an IPBES should facilitate access to knowledge in developing countries. The EU, IRAN, NEW ZEALAND and BRAZIL supported option two.

Regular and timely assessments: Delegates considered three options, wherein an IPBES would: carry out regular and timely assessments, including comprehensive global and subglobal assessments and thematic issues at appropriate scales; carry out regular and timely assessments, which would include comprehensive global, subglobal, subregional and national assessments and thematic issues at appropriate scales; or have no active role in undertaking regular and timely assessments.

MEXICO backed option one and suggested that a platform could catalogue relevant assessments to avoid duplication. The AFRICAN GROUP, supported by BRAZIL and GRENADA, favored option one amended to authorize an IPBES to undertake subregional assessments. Supporting option one, CHINA, the US and JAPAN stressed the need to take a step-by-step approach, focusing initially on international and regional levels, and to ensure the independence and transparency of an IPBES. The EU stressed the need to develop a coherent framework for conducting assessments. NORWAY called for language on the need for marine and terrestrial assessments. ICSU supported option one, and argued that an IPBES could best contribute to national and sub-national assessments by developing protocols to ensure the compatibility and combinability of assessments across scales. UN University-Institute of Advanced Studies (IAS) was open to either option one or option two. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Centre for Biodiversity offered to work with an IPBES to strengthen regional science-policy linkages.