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Item 8 of the provisional agenda*

PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL SCIENCE-POLICY PLATFORM ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Conference of the Parties, in its decision [14/36](#), welcomed with appreciation the progress in implementing the first work programme of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and invited the Platform to consider a request as part of its work programme towards 2030.
2. The Conference of the Parties, in the same decision, requested the Executive Secretary:
 - (a) Further to decision [XII/25](#), to develop modalities for the systematic consideration of all deliverables of the Platform, taking into consideration the findings of the review of the Platform, with a view to optimizing their use in support of the implementation of the Convention;
 - (b) To prepare, for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, and for subsequent consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting, proposals for a further request to be considered for inclusion in the IPBES programme of work towards 2030 with a view to supporting the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.
3. Section II below reviews how the IPBES deliverables to date have been considered under the Convention and, in this light, addresses the request, noted above, to develop modalities for the systematic consideration of all deliverables. Section III provides an update on the work programme of the Platform, including the new elements of work programme towards 2030, agreed by the Plenary of the Platform at its seventh meeting, and its implementation, while section IV suggests elements of a proposal for a further request by the Convention to be considered for inclusion in the work programme. Section V provides a draft recommendation for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice.
4. The present document is supported by an information document prepared by the IPBES Secretariat providing detailed information on progress in the implementation of the IPBES work programme (CBD/SBSTTA/24/INF/17). An information document prepared for the twenty-third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (CBD/SBSTTA/23/INF/16) is also relevant in this regard.

II. SYSTEMATIC CONSIDERATION OF DELIVERABLES OF THE PLATFORM BY THE SUBSIDIARY BODY

5. Decision XII/25 of the Conference of the Parties already sets out modalities for the work of the Executive Secretary, the Subsidiary Body and its Chair, and the Conference of the Parties itself, providing for

* CBD/SBSTTA/24/1.

the Subsidiary Body to submit to the Conference of the Parties proposals for the IPBES work programme and recommendations (para. 1), and to exchange scientific and technical information with the Platform (para. 2).

6. In line with the modalities set out in paragraph 5(e) of decision XII/25, the Executive Secretary has brought the completed assessment reports of the Platform to the attention of the Subsidiary Body for its consideration with regard to the relevance of the findings for the work of the Convention, and for the development, as appropriate, of recommendations to the Conference of the Parties. On the advice of the Subsidiary Body, the Conference of the Parties has welcomed each of the assessment reports and endorsed or taken note of their findings. This process has also resulted in a number of concrete results (see table below). For example:

(a) The Conference of the Parties developed comprehensive policy guidance on the conservation and sustainable use of pollinators (see decision [13/15](#)), and updated the plan of action (2018-2030) for the International Initiative for the Conservation and Sustainable use of Pollinators (decision [14/6](#)) on the basis of the thematic assessment on pollinators, pollination and food production;

(b) The Subsidiary Body adopted conclusions on scenarios towards the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity making use of the methodological assessment on scenarios and models of biodiversity and ecosystem services;

(c) The Conference of the Parties endorsed the key messages of the thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration that support achieving the Sustainable Development Goals through the use of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and mitigation, disaster risk reduction and combating land degradation.

7. Moreover, as called for in decisions [14/1](#) and [14/34](#), the IPBES assessments have been widely used in the process for developing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, for example:

(a) The initial regional consultations were informed by the regional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services for Africa, Asia and the Pacific, the Americas, and Europe and Central Asia;

(b) The Subsidiary Body at its twenty-third meeting considered an overview of the findings of the *Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*, other IPBES assessments and other relevant assessments, and implications for the work of the Convention and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, prepared by the Secretariat, stressed the need for urgent action to address the drivers of biodiversity loss, in line with the findings of the assessment, called on Governments to make the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework a matter of high priority for all their ministries, agencies and offices, and recognized that a key element in the development of pathways for living in harmony with nature, includes making changes in global financial and economic systems;

(c) The global assessment informed the development of the zero draft of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework;

(d) The global assessment was an important source of evidence for the fifth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*, informing, among other things, the analysis on links between biodiversity and the Sustainable Development Goals, the assessment of progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and the identification of seven of the eight areas of transition featured in the *Outlook*. The Secretariats of IPBES and the Convention have also collaborated through a joint communication strategy to promote the findings of both the IPBES global assessment and the fifth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*.

Table

Overview of deliverables from IPBES, their consideration by SBSTTA and COP, and outcome of this consideration

<i>Deliverable from IPBES</i>	<i>Consideration by SBSTTA and COP</i>	<i>Resulting guidance from SBSTTA and COP</i>
	SBSTTA rec. XX/9	COP welcomed the summary for policymakers (SPM) and the full report of the assessment,

<i>Deliverable from IPBES</i>	<i>Consideration by SBSTTA and COP</i>	<i>Resulting guidance from SBSTTA and COP</i>
Assessment report on pollinators, pollination and food production Approved at IPBES-4 (2016) https://ipbes.net/assessment-reports/pollinators	COP decision XIII/15	endorsed its key messages, and encouraged Parties and others to use the assessment; COP adopted policy advice to Governments, businesses and others to improve conservation and management of pollinators, address drivers of pollinator declines, and work towards sustainable food production systems and agriculture
	Further considered at SBSTTA and COP-14 (further to decision XIII/15)	Updated the Plan of Action for the International Initiative on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Pollinators and prepare a draft updated and streamlined plan of action, including capacity-building
Methodological assessment report on scenarios and models of biodiversity and ecosystem services Approved at IPBES-4 (2016) https://ipbes.net/assessment-reports/scenarios	Considered at SBSTTA-20 (rec. XX/13) and COP-13 (decision XIII/29)	COP welcomed the assessment, recognized its high relevance for work under the Convention, and in particular, fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook; encouraged Parties and others to further develop and use scenarios and models to support decision-making and the evaluation of policies, and invited the scientific community to address key gaps in methods for modelling the impacts of drivers and policy interventions on biodiversity and ecosystem services
	SBSTTA-21 (rec. XXI/1) COP-14 (decision 14/1)	SBSTTA developed conclusions on scenarios for the 2050 Vision on Biodiversity COP noted the relevance of the assessment to the discussions on the long-term strategic directions to the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity and the process of developing a post-2020 global biodiversity framework
Assessment report on land degradation and restoration Approved at IPBES-6 (2018) https://ipbes.net/assessment-reports/ldr	SBSTTA rec. 22/4 and 23/1	COP welcomed the assessment
	COP decision 14/5	COP welcomed the assessment, endorsed the key messages that support achieving the Sustainable Development Goals through the use of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and mitigation, disaster risk reduction, and combating land degradation
Regional assessment reports on biodiversity and ecosystem services for the Americas, Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Europe and Central Asia Approved at IPBES-6 (2018) https://ipbes.net/regional-assessments	SBSTTA rec. 22/4 COP decisions 14/1 and 14/34 SBSTTA rec. 23/1	COP welcomed the assessments and called for their use in preparing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

<i>Deliverable from IPBES</i>	<i>Consideration by SBSTTA and COP</i>	<i>Resulting guidance from SBSTTA and COP</i>
<p>Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services Approved at IPBES-7 (2019) https://ipbes.net/global-assessment</p>	<p>SBSTTA rec. 23/1</p>	<p>SBSTTA welcomed the global assessment report and took note of the information presented in the note by the Executive Secretary which included an overview of the findings of the global assessment and implications for the work of the Convention prepared by the Executive Secretary; requested the Co-Chairs of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework to consider the findings of the global assessment when preparing documentation for the second meeting of the Working Group; and invited the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework to consider the findings of the global assessment in its deliberations</p>

8. The Conference of the Parties has also encouraged the use of the assessment reports at the national level and invited Governments and relevant organizations to strengthen the capacities of national focal points for the Convention and decision makers to make effective use of the key findings of the assessments. In this context, the United Nations Environment Programme’s World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) is currently supporting 12 countries to undertake national ecosystem assessments and develop national science-policy platforms (see annex).

9. The Secretariats of IPBES and the Convention have also collaborated in functions of the Platform other than producing assessments. For example, the two secretariats have collaborated to support the organization of dialogues with representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities to provide inputs for the global assessment and the assessment on invasive alien species, and to facilitate participation from the IPBES task force on knowledge and data in the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership. Further, the two secretariats have collaborated to promote the participation of authors of the Platforms’ reports and its other experts in relevant meetings organized under the Convention, including in the regional and thematic consultations organized in support of the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

10. An independent review of the Platform at the conclusion of its first work programme was recently undertaken. The report of the review panel was highly positive with regard to the implementation of the work programme of the Platform. However, the review panel identified six overarching areas that require the attention of the Platform’s membership, leadership, partners and other stakeholders. The IPBES Plenary at its seventh meeting, in 2019, welcomed the report on the review of the Platform.¹ The full report, in reviewing the engagement of IPBES with the biodiversity-related conventions, notes the following:

¹ IPBES-7 also welcomed the response by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau and the response by the Executive Secretary to the review and requested IPBES/7/5 to take the recommendations made by the review panel into account in the implementation of the rolling work programme of the Platform up to 2030 and to identify solutions and/or issues for the Plenary to consider at its eighth session. The full report of the review panel is available as IPBES/7/INF/18, and the 45 findings and 36 recommendations are also provided in IPBES/7/5. The responses of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau and the Executive Secretary are provided in IPBES/7/INF/19 and IPBES/7/INF/20, respectively. These six overarching areas that require the attention are:

(a) In order to ensure its strategic importance and sustainability in the long term, IPBES has to be more intentional about its ultimate impact on the status of biodiversity and ecosystem services and maintain and strengthen its niche, value proposition and comparative advantage in a complex landscape with many competing priorities;

(b) IPBES has to strengthen significantly the policy dimensions of its work. Building the evidence base is necessary but not sufficient;

“Cooperation with the CBD is well established and value is seen on both sides. A large majority of respondents to the online survey consider the complementarity between IPBES and the CBD to be good to excellent. The bibliometric analysis confirms that CBD stands out among MEAs in its uptake of IPBES as IPBES is mentioned in all COP reports since 2012 and there is a high and steady rate in CBD working documents citing IPBES. The Platform has overall been responsive to requests made by CBD (e.g. pollination was identified as a priority by the Convention), and the Convention has supported the uptake of IPBES assessments e.g. policy recommendations on pollination and pollinators adopted at thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 13)). Other evidence of a direct linkage includes the use of the IPBES scenario and models’ assessments by SBSTTA or procedures in place for CBD to provide inputs into the IPBES proposed new work programme.”

11. In the light of the foregoing review of the consideration of IPBES deliverables by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, it would appear that the procedure set out in decision XII/25 already allows the Subsidiary Body and the Conference of the Parties to consider systematically all deliverables of the Platform available in a timely manner and in a format relevant to the Convention. This would also appear to be borne out by the independent review of the Platform. It is not evident, therefore, what additional modalities might be necessary to ensure the systematic consideration of IPBES deliverables. However, opportunities to further strengthen cooperation with respect to the other functions of IPBES could be further explored.

III. UPDATE ON THE WORK OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL SCIENCE-POLICY PLATFORM ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

12. The IPBES Plenary, at its seventh session, adopted in decision IPBES-7/1 on the rolling work programme of the Platform up to 2030. The work programme includes six objectives: assessing knowledge, building capacity, strengthening knowledge foundations, supporting policy, communicating and engaging and improving the effectiveness of the Platform. This section provides an overview of the work programme; further details are provided in CBD/SBSTTA/24/INF/17.

13. The rolling work programme of the Platform up to 2030 includes the following three ongoing assessments, which started within the first work programme (for the timetable for the review of the various drafts please refer to CBD/SBSTTA/24/INF/17):

- (a) A methodological assessment regarding the diverse conceptualization of multiple values of nature and its benefits, including biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services (values assessment), to be completed for consideration by the Plenary at its ninth session in the first half of 2022;
- (b) A thematic assessment of the sustainable use of wild species (sustainable use assessment), to be completed for consideration by the Plenary at its ninth session in the first half of 2022;
- (c) A thematic assessment of invasive alien species, to be completed for consideration by the Plenary at its tenth session in the first half of 2023;

14. In the rolling work programme of the Platform up to 2030, adopted by decision IPBES-7/1, the following four deliverables were included:

- (a) A thematic assessment of the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food and health (nexus assessment);

(c) IPBES has to do more to address the tension between the global and regional scope of its work and recognize the essentially national and local nature of implementation;

(d) IPBES has to develop a clearer and more strategic approach to its stakeholders, including by clarifying its partnerships strategy and allowing for more strategic engagement by a key set of partners.

(e) While assessments have – for good reason -- featured prominently among the early deliverables of IPBES, and will remain at its core, care must be taken to streamline and strengthen relevant processes while not neglecting other important deliverables and priorities;

(f) IPBES members, its partners and other committed stakeholders have to do more to help to ensure its financial sustainability in the long term.

- (b) A technical paper on the interlinkages between biodiversity and climate change;
- (c) A thematic assessment of the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and the determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 Vision for biodiversity (transformative change assessment);
- (d) A methodological assessment of the impact and dependence of business on biodiversity and nature's contributions to people (business and biodiversity assessment).

15. In the same decision, the Plenary approved scoping processes for the nexus and transformative change assessments, based on the initial scoping reports for the assessments set out in appendix II to document IPBES/7/6, for consideration by the Plenary at its eighth session. The Plenary approved a scoping process of the business and biodiversity assessment to be presented for consideration by Plenary at its ninth session.

16. Building on two online conferences held in 2019, the scoping meetings for the nexus and transformative change assessments were held virtually in March and April 2020, respectively, followed by external reviews of the draft scoping report. The draft scoping reports will be reviewed again and finalized for the eighth session of IPBES.

17. Considering the extraordinary situation caused by COVID-19 and given the role that the Platform can play in strengthening the knowledge base on biodiversity, IPBES organized a virtual Platform workshop on biodiversity and pandemics which was held in July 2020. The workshop report aimed at supporting the preparation of ongoing or future IPBES deliverables, such as the scoping of the nexus assessment and to inform the other ongoing and planned assessments. The workshop brought together 17 experts selected by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel as well as 5 experts from the ongoing IPBES assessments. In addition, resource persons from relevant organizations, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, attended the workshop. The workshop report was launched on 29 October 2020; the final version is available at: <https://ipbes.net/pandemics>.

18. Following consultations with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the two bodies decided to convene a co-sponsored workshop on biodiversity and climate change to be held online from 14 to 17 December 2020. The report of that workshop will support the preparation of the scoping of the nexus assessment in addition to contributing to the Platform's nexus assessment as well as to the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) of the Panel and its Synthesis Report.

19. A call for the nomination of experts to assist with the scoping of the business and biodiversity assessment was launched on 12 November 2020 with a deadline of 1 February 2021.² An online conference to collect early input into the scoping process is tentatively scheduled for January 2021 and the online scoping meeting for April 2021.

20. In decision IPBES-7/1, the Plenary also extended the mandates of the task forces on capacity-building, knowledge and data and indigenous and local knowledge for the implementation of the respective objectives of the rolling work programme of IPBES up to 2030. It also established task forces on policy support tools and methodologies and scenarios and models. Further details on the work of the task forces are provided in decision IPBES-7/1, annex II.

21. The eighth session of the Plenary of the Platform is scheduled for 14 to 24 June 2021 as an online meeting.

IV. PROPOSALS FOR A FURTHER REQUEST TO BE CONSIDERED FOR INCLUSION IN THE PROGRAMME OF WORK TOWARDS 2030 OF THE PLATFORM

22. As noted above, in decision 14/36, the Conference of the Parties invited the Platform to consider a request (that was annexed to the decision) as part of its work programme towards 2030 and also requested the Executive Secretary to prepare, for consideration by the Subsidiary Body, and for subsequent consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting, proposals for a further request to be

² Available at: <https://ipbes.net/notification/nomination/scoping-of-the-assessment-of-business-and-biodiversity>

considered for inclusion in the programme of work towards 2030 of the Platform with a view to supporting the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

23. The rolling work plan of the Platform up to 2030, adopted by decision IPBES-7/1 responds fully to the requests of the Convention set out in paragraph 2 of the annex to decision 14/36. In particular, the four new deliverables, namely the nexus, transformative change and business and biodiversity assessments, and the technical paper on biodiversity climate change align very closely with the specific requests. Moreover, even though the post-2020 global biodiversity framework is still under development, it is clear that each of the topics of these planned assessments will be highly relevant, and, therefore, it is envisaged that they will support the implementation of the framework.

24. IPBES decision 7/1 also includes an invitation to consider the scope and timing of a future global assessment. This invitation is scheduled to be addressed at the ninth session of the Plenary (expected to be held in the first half of 2022), where the Plenary will reconsider the requests, inputs and suggestions received in time for consideration at that session, including for the second global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services and for an assessment on ecological connectivity (decision IPBES-7/1, para. 8). The Plenary also decided to launch a call for further requests, inputs and suggestions regarding the work programme in time for consideration by the Plenary at its tenth session (expected to be held in the first half of 2023) and to consider at the same session the need for and timing of further calls (decision IPBES-7/1, para. 2).

25. The Subsidiary Body may therefore wish to recommend to the Conference of the Parties that it specify its request for a second global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services with regard to the scope and timing of the assessment to ensure that it addresses the needs of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

26. The Subsidiary Body may also wish to consider whether there is a need for the Conference of the Parties to submit to the Platform further requests in support of the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. Given the need to strengthen the monitoring and review processes under the Convention, a potentially relevant area of work not yet considered could involve methodological support to help and assist monitoring and reporting, at the national level, of status and trends in biodiversity and ecosystem services and of the drivers of their change.

27. These suggestions are reflected in the suggested recommendations in section V below.

V. SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATION

28. The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice may wish to recommend that the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting adopt a decision along the following lines, complementing the draft decision contained in recommendation 23/1:

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions 12/25 and 14/36,

Also recalling that the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice has systematically considered each of the assessment reports prepared by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and has prepared, in each case, pertinent recommendations for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties, in line with the procedures established in decision XII/25;

1. *Welcomes* the rolling work programme of the Platform up to 2030, approved by the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in its decision 7/1, noting with appreciation that the request of the Conference of the Parties set out in decision 14/36 has been met, and that, among other things, (a) the planned thematic assessment of the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food and health (nexus assessment), (b) the planned thematic assessment of the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and the determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity (transformative change assessment), and (c) the planned methodological assessment of the impact and dependence of business on biodiversity and nature's contributions to people (business and biodiversity assessment) are expected to contribute to the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework;

2. *Also welcomes* the progress in the scoping of the nexus assessment and the transformative change assessment and looks forward to their consideration for approval and initiation at the eighth session of the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services;³

3. *Further welcomes* the report of the workshop convened by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services on biodiversity and pandemics, and notes its relevance for the work of the Convention, including the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, as well as the work carried out under the Convention on the interlinkages between biodiversity and health;

4. *Welcomes* the cooperation between the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, including the report of the joint co-sponsored workshop on biodiversity and climate change, and encourages the two bodies to further strengthen their collaboration, as appropriate, with a view to supporting an integrated approach;

5. *Notes* that the ninth session of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services will reconsider the requests, inputs and suggestions received in time for consideration at that session, including for a second global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services and for an assessment on ecological connectivity and invites the Platform to prepare a second global assessment, to be delivered in early 2029, that would, among other things:

(a) Include a review of progress towards the goals and targets at the global, regional and, as appropriate, subregional, levels;

(b) Incorporate global, regional and, as appropriate, subregional components;

(c) Build upon previous assessments of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, including the nexus assessment and transformative change assessment;

6. *Invites* the Platform to consider providing methodological support to help and assist monitoring and reporting, at the national level, of status and trends in biodiversity and ecosystem services and of the drivers of their change;

7. *Requests* the Executive Secretary and invites the Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services to explore options for further strengthening cooperation with regard to data and knowledge, capacity-building, and indigenous and local knowledge;

8. *Notes* the progress in a number of countries in elaborating national assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services, encourages all Parties and other Governments to consider carrying out such national assessments, with the full engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities and business and civil society, to contribute to the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and encourages relevant organizations to provide technical support, as appropriate.

³ Depending on the timing of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, this paragraph may be updated in the light of the outcome of the eighth session of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.

*Annex***UTILIZING NATIONAL ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENTS TO SUPPORT THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL SCIENCE-POLICY PLATFORM ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES AND THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

1. National ecosystem assessments not only deliver an evidence base that meets the needs of different sectors and encourages integration of knowledge, but also the process of carrying out an effective national ecosystem assessment actively engages various stakeholders and facilitates understanding of alternative priorities with regard to specific policy-relevant questions. This collaborative approach contributes towards better uptake of the outputs. The carrying out of national ecosystem assessments also provides an opportunity to build capacity at the national scale around strengthening the science-policy interface, which can support national policies and measures, including those necessary for the implementation of the biodiversity-related conventions and related processes.
2. Capacity-building has been a key element of the work programme of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) since its establishment. Capacity-building activities within IPBES focus both on developing the capacities required by IPBES (for example, engaging early career experts in the IPBES assessment process, strengthening the engagement of national focal points), and on catalysing activities at the national level. Activities identified as a priority by the IPBES Plenary and articulated in the work of the IPBES Capacity-building Rolling Plan⁴ include enhancing the capacity to undertake, use and improve national assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services, which includes the promoting and facilitating national science-policy platforms and networks. This is consistent with decision 14/1 (paras. 12-13) of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.
3. To support the work of IPBES, the United Nations Environment Programme's World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) has developed an initiative that builds capacities for national ecosystem assessments that respond to nationally identified needs, thereby linking science and policy. This initiative is currently supporting 12 countries⁵ to undertake national ecosystem assessments and develop national science-policy platforms, utilizing, as appropriate, the IPBES *Guide on the Production of Assessments*⁶ and the IPBES Conceptual Framework.⁷
4. An integral part of these assessment processes is to identify policy relevant questions, linkages and entry points, thus supporting the development of national policies and plans, such as national biodiversity strategies and action plans. They also provide information that supports the development of national reports. Not only are national ecosystem assessments relevant in the development of biodiversity-specific policies, plans and strategies, but they can also provide an evidence base for mainstreaming biodiversity into other sectors (for example, agriculture, water and forestry). In addition, the assessment process itself can contribute towards mainstreaming biodiversity into cross-sectoral decision-making as a result of increased stakeholder engagement and data collation associated with the assessment process.
5. Financial support for the initiative is received from the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU), and it is carried out in collaboration with partners, including the United Nations Development Programme and its BES-Net initiative, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Further information on the initiative and its impacts can be found in CBD/SBSTTA/24/INF/18.

⁴ See annex 1 to IPBES/5/INF/3 (<https://ipbes.net/sites/default/files/downloads/pdf/ipbes-5-inf-3.pdf>)

⁵ Tranche 1: Cameroon, Colombia, Ethiopia and Viet Nam; Tranche 2: Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Grenada; Tranche 3: Argentina, Dominican Republic, Malawi and Thailand.

⁶ See <https://ipbes.net/guide-production-assessments>

⁷ See <https://ipbes.net/conceptual-framework>