



JOINT STATEMENT FROM THE SIX BIODIVERSITY-RELATED CONVENTIONS

on the occasion of the

First session of the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES-1)

21 January 2013

This is a statement on behalf of the Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species and its related Agreements, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the World Heritage Convention and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The six biodiversity-related conventions would like to join other speakers in thanking the Government of Germany for hosting this important meeting and in warmly welcoming the establishment of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). We are confident that it will play a major role in assisting countries and the international community in their efforts to identify, on the basis of sound and objective science, the policies and actions needed to implement their respective MEA obligations and achieve their objectives.

In particular, we hope that early activities under IPBES will help countries to implement the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, which have 2015 and 2020 as target dates.

The Platform could contribute, for example, by catalyzing the availability of biodiversity observations and the further development of biodiversity and ecosystem models, and by bringing this information and analysis together to assist countries and the international community in identifying the policies and actions needed to achieve the Aichi Targets.

Regional or sub-regional assessments could not only provide the building blocks for a comprehensive global assessment, but also engage directly with national assessment and scenario-building initiatives, in turn linked to planning and implementation of national biodiversity activities. By engaging national and sub-regional expertise they would build capacity.

Following Rio+20, IPBES has a major role to play in raising awareness among policy makers and the public at large on the essential role of biodiversity and ecosystem services in supporting sustainable development. To do this, the Platform must be truly interdisciplinary, drawing upon the full range of relevant social and natural science disciplines as well as indigenous and traditional knowledge.

The six biodiversity-related conventions have an important role in setting the global agenda on biodiversity and ecosystem services, and as we have emphasized throughout the process of establishing IPBES, we would like to see a strong relationship between the Platform and the biodiversity-related conventions. We are pleased to see that the chairs of the scientific bodies of the Conventions will participate in the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel as observers.

The various Conventions have addressed the relationship with IPBES at recent meetings of their Conferences of the Parties. At each of these meetings, the Parties to the respective conventions have welcomed the establishment of IPBES and tasked their scientific and governing bodies to identify the needs of the Conventions that might be addressed by IPBES.

In the case of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Conference of the Parties, at its 11th meeting, welcomed the establishment of IPBES, and invited the Platform to consider how its work plan can contribute to the achievement of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. It requests IPBES specifically to consider ways in which the activities of the Platform could contribute to assessments of the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and to provide information on policy options available to deliver the 2050 Vision of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity. Furthermore, it requests IPBES to build on and contribute to the Global Biodiversity Outlook, the flagship publication of the Convention on Biological Diversity on the latest data on status and trends of biodiversity.

Further, COP tasked the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) to identify scientific and technical needs related to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 including those that could be considered by IPBES. SBSTTA is also to develop further recommendations as to how the Convention should consider relevant outputs from IPBES. We see an important opportunity for synergies between this work and the intersessional work of IPBES.

The 11th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention has welcomed the establishment of IPBES and adopted specific actions to contribute to the development of the potential for IPBES to serve as a mechanism to strengthen the science-policy interface with

respect to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including wetland biodiversity and ecosystem services, and to make information available to the Ramsar Convention and its Contracting Parties to support decision-making related to implementation. COP11 has made specific requests to Ramsar Contracting Parties, mandated the Ramsar Standing Committee, and instructed the Ramsar Secretariat and the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) to identify and articulate Ramsar implementation needs at global, regional, and sub-regional levels relevant to IPBES.

The 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species adopted Resolution 10.8 on cooperation with IPBES. It requests CMS Focal Points and Scientific Councillors to liaise regularly with the national representatives in the IPBES to ensure that the needs for research and policy guidance related to migratory species, especially those listed under CMS appendices, are being adequately addressed by IPBES. It calls upon IPBES to include in its work programme the need for assessments and capacity building relating to the conservation and sustainable use of migratory species of wild animals. It encourages CMS Parties and relevant organizations to make funds available to support IPBES research reviews and assessments. Finally, it requests the CMS Scientific Council to undertake a review of needs and opportunities for improving the interface between science and policy in relation to migratory species.

The World Heritage Centre reported to the 36th session of the World Heritage Committee (St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, June-July 2012) on the progress made in the establishment of IPBES. The World Heritage Centre looks forward to cooperate closely with IPBES and considers that the network of natural World Heritage sites, which comprises more than 10% of the global protected area estate, including some of the most important sites in terms of biodiversity conservation and ecosystems, could be used as priority sites for assessing the state of the planet's biodiversity, its ecosystems and the essential services they provide to society.

The 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (Doha, 2010) directed the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees and the Secretariat to provide all necessary input into the process of IPBES, ensure that the role of CITES receives due recognition and report to the Standing Committee to seek additional guidance. As envisaged by CoP15, the Standing Committee will report to the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Bangkok, March 2013) concerning IPBES. Its report recommends that the Conference adopt several draft decisions for IPBES-related work by the Standing Committee, the Animals and Plants Committees and the Secretariat.

We believe that by working closely together, IPBES and the conventions can support our common objectives of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and maintenance of ecosystem services for human well-being. Together, we can also contribute to a more coherent approach to international environmental governance and scientific support, as well as improve the effectiveness of science-policy interfaces for biodiversity and ecosystem services at all levels.

Through contributions from CITES, CMS, Ramsar and the CBD, the biodiversity-related conventions have already actively responded to the invitation to contribute to the inter-sessional process in preparation of this meeting.

We look forward to contributing to the work of this meeting and the inter-sessional process that lies ahead for addressing the remaining issues to make IPBES fully operational. The six biodiversity-related conventions believe that we have a good basis for the discussions ahead and are eager to see IPBES becoming operational as soon as possible and start delivering its products early on to further build momentum for the implementation of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and to facilitate the mainstreaming of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the sustainable development agenda, in particular the different processes taking place at the United Nations in New York as a follow-up to the outcomes of the Rio+20 Conference.

We wish you a successful meeting!

Thank you.