

The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

BRIEFING ON IPBES IN THE GREEN ROOM AT

9 A.M. ON THE 16TH FEBRUARY 2009

Q1. What is IPBES?

The core mandate of an Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) would be to provide authoritative, independent, credible, inclusive, and internationally peer-reviewed policy-relevant scientifically based advice on changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services and their implications for human well-being at multiple scales. In doing so, the platform will harness networks of scientific experts as well as the policy communities from local to global. IPBES is envisioned to complement, among others, the scientific subsidiary bodies of the biodiversity-related conventions with the needed scientifically credible information on emerging issues in the science of biodiversity and ecosystem services change.

Q2. Is there a need for IPBES?

The current science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services is comprised of a number of national and international mechanisms and processes. It has been recognized by various independent publications that the contribution of all these processes to policy making at appropriate levels could be further strengthened if they were supported by an intergovernmental science-policy platform, which will ensure the credibility, legitimacy and saliency of emerging scientific findings and recommendations,.

Q3. What will IPBES deliver?

The science-policy platform would generate a range of outcomes, including:

- a) Provision of authoritative, up-to-date and policy-relevant but not policy prescriptive analyses of the state of biodiversity and ecosystem services and their relationship with human well-being to support decision-making at appropriate levels and scales;
- b) Improved communication and knowledge brokering to aid understanding and policy-relevant application of scientific results on biodiversity and ecosystem services; and
- c) Improved scientific support based on requests from the subsidiary advisory bodies of the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), natural resource management and development-related international bodies, multilateral banks, regional biodiversity and ecosystem services programs, and national governments, by providing proactive credible scientific advice on existing and emerging threats.

Q4. How will IPBES benefit Civil Society?

- a) Highlighting and reinforcing the critical links between biodiversity and ecosystem services with economic and human development. A better understanding supported by credible science (including all forms of knowledge) to guide policies;
- b) Fellowship program for young scholars from developing countries; and
- c) Building scientific expertise to provide policy relevant technical support to civil society in international negotiations relating to biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Q6. What were the main outcomes from the Putrajaya Meeting in November 2008?

- a) There was consensus among countries that there was a need to strengthen the science-policy interface;
- b) There was concern by some countries that a gap analysis be carried out which undertakes a through scientific analysis on existing science-policy mechanisms and explore if a new mechanism is needed;
- c) There was general agreement that a new mechanism should be independent although two countries suggested that it should be a subsidiary body of the CBD; and
- d) There was agreement among most countries of the proposed work program comprising of early warning and early lessons, assessments policy support and capacity building with most developing countries calling for capacity building as an integral part of the new mechanism.

Q7. What are the expected steps after Kuala Lumpur?

- a) UNEP to undertake a preliminary gap analysis for the purpose of facilitating the ongoing discussions on how to strengthen the science-policy interface. The report will be made available as an information document at 25th Session of the UNEP GC/GMEF that would later be reviewed and further refined; and
- b) Executive Director of UNEP to convene a second Intergovernmental Multi-stakeholder Meeting on an Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services with the view to strengthening and improving the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for human well-being, including consideration of a new science-policy platform.