



**Governing Council  
of the United Nations  
Environment Programme**

Distr.: General  
15 December 2008

English only



**Twenty-fifth session of the Governing Council/  
Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

Nairobi, 16–20 February 2009

Items 4 (a) and 5 of the provisional agenda\*

**Policy issues: state of the environment**

**Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of United Nations summits  
and major intergovernmental meetings, including the decisions of the Governing Council**

**Documents submitted to the ad hoc intergovernmental and  
multi-stakeholder meeting on an intergovernmental  
science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services,  
held in Putrajaya, Malaysia, from 10 to 12 November 2008**

**Note by the Executive Director**

*Summary*

The annexes to the present note set out the working documents submitted to the ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting on an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services, held in Putrajaya, Malaysia, from 10 to 12 November 2008. The annexes are as follows:

Annex I: Building on the global strategy for follow-up to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and the consultative process towards an international mechanism of scientific expertise on biodiversity: Revised concept note on an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services;

Annex II: Programme of work and budget for an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services: Initial four-year period;

Annex III: Governance structure and secretariat functions for an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services;

Annex IV: Rules and procedures of an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services.

\* UNEP/GC.25/1.

## Annex I

### **Building on the global strategy for follow-up to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and the consultative process towards an international mechanism of scientific expertise on biodiversity**

### **Revised concept note<sup>1</sup> on an intergovernmental science<sup>2</sup>-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services**

#### **Executive summary**

1. The current science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services comprises a number of national and international mechanisms and processes. The contribution of all these processes for policymaking at the appropriate levels could, however, be strengthened further if they were supported by an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services that ensured the credibility, legitimacy and saliency of emerging scientific findings and recommendations.

2. The platform will function as an intergovernmental mechanism to strengthen existing scientific bodies, whether by providing them with access to the best science or by providing the link with policymakers to make their work more policy-relevant. Similarly, the platform will provide policymakers with the best available science and advice in the field of biodiversity and ecosystem services. In doing so, it will harness networks of scientific experts and the policy communities. It is envisaged that the platform will complement, among others, the scientific subsidiary bodies of the biodiversity- and ecosystem-related conventions and relevant intergovernmental bodies with the needed scientifically credible information on emerging issues in the science of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

3. It is envisaged that the main value that the platform will add to existing scientific and policymaking bodies will be:

(a) Early warning and early lessons by monitoring trends and new scientific findings in the form of reports and alerts to be made available to relevant stakeholders in a timely manner;

(b) A uniform and consistent framework for generating policy-relevant information, through integrated assessments using the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment framework, about the state, drivers, trends and outlooks of interactions between humans and the environment, focusing on the impacts of changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services on human well-being at multiple levels;

(c) To provide policy support and outreach to relevant stakeholders by packaging and disseminating scientific information in a manner that responds to their needs.

4. A four-year cycle approach is recommended for delivering the benefits outlined above. This will enable the platform's progress to be monitored and evaluated and will create the flexibility to change, revise and amend its work programme accordingly to meet stakeholders' needs.

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1 The original concept note was prepared by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in consultation with the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and the international mechanism of scientific expertise on biodiversity network of experts. It was developed following an invitation included in the statement adopted by the international steering committee of the consultative process towards an international mechanism of scientific expertise on biodiversity, at its meeting in Montpellier, France, in November 2007. This revised concept note reflects the comments received during the open e-review process.

2 The term "science" is used in the platform in the broadest sense that includes natural, social and economic sciences, in addition to the discipline of traditional knowledge.

### **Overcoming barriers to development**

*The world is witnessing unprecedented losses and changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services, which are having a negative effect on human well-being and sustainable development. The future development of all countries will be impaired if these losses are not reversed, but especially hard hit will be developing countries in their efforts to alleviate poverty. Public and private stakeholders therefore need to mitigate and adapt to changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services through appropriate policy decisions. Such efforts are, however, knowledge-intensive and need to be supported by a dynamic science-policy platform that is credible, salient and legitimate.*

## **I. Background and rationale**

1. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment demonstrated that, over the past 50 years, humanity has caused unprecedented losses in biodiversity and declines in ecosystem services. In fact, 60 per cent of the 24 assessed ecosystem services are in decline and further degradation is expected if immediate action is not taken. This would have a particular, but not exclusive, negative impact on development processes in developing countries.

2. Scientific knowledge on the links between biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being has increased significantly since the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment was completed. There is, however, a need for a stronger international science-policy platform to enable emerging scientific knowledge to be translated into specific policy action at the appropriate levels.

3. The current science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services comprises a number of national and international programmes, organizations, mechanisms and processes. The biodiversity and ecosystem-related multilateral environmental agreements, for example, contain provisions on scientific and technical cooperation. Their contribution to policymaking at the appropriate levels could, however, be strengthened further if an intergovernmental science-policy platform were able to provide a scientifically sound, uniform and consistent framework for tackling changes to biodiversity and ecosystem services.

4. The report by the European Environment Agency, "Late lessons from early warnings: the precautionary principle 1896–2000", identifies a gap between scientific findings and policy responses. There is therefore a need for a mechanism to convey the findings from the scientific community to the needs of the policy communities in a timely manner and vice versa.

5. The consultation towards an international mechanism for scientific expertise on biodiversity and the global strategy on Millennium Ecosystem Assessment follow-up both reflect a general agreement on the need for an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services. This need was further strengthened by decision IX/15 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its ninth meeting, held in May 2008, which welcomed the initiative by the Executive Director of UNEP to convene an ad hoc open-ended intergovernmental multi-stakeholder meeting to consider establishing such a platform and to invite Parties to send their science and policy experts thereto.

6. The present concept note is intended to support consultations with Governments and other stakeholders on the proposed establishment of a platform. It explores the needs, rationale and modalities for such a platform, together with possible activities and institutional arrangements. In doing so, it draws not only on the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and international mechanism of scientific expertise on biodiversity processes, but also from lessons learned from global processes such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Global Environmental Outlook, International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development, Global Biodiversity Outlook, the Economics of Ecosystem Services and Biodiversity, national processes for linking science and policy and continuing networking and capacity-building initiatives.

## **II. Core mandate and expected outcomes of an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services**

7. The platform's core mandate would be to provide authoritative, independent, credible, inclusive and internationally peer-reviewed, policy-relevant scientific advice on changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services and their implications for human well-being at multiple levels. Its overarching goals will be to contribute to more effective and equitable decision-making that secures human well-being and

strengthened scientific linkages between biodiversity and ecosystem-related multilateral environmental agreements.

8. The platform would generate a range of outcomes, including:

(a) 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 the appropriate levels and scales with the relevant information needed for improving understanding of changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services and the implications for human well-being, monitoring and reporting and developing policy;

(b) Improved dialogue between scientific and other knowledge systems and understandings, perspectives and values regarding biodiversity and ecosystem services to help to make policy decisions more effective, efficient and equitable for the sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services;

(c) Improved communication and knowledge-brokering to aid understanding and policy-relevant application of scientific results on biodiversity and ecosystem services;

(d) Improved scientific support based on requests from the subsidiary advisory bodies of multilateral environmental agreements, natural resource management and development-related international bodies, multilateral banks, regional biodiversity and ecosystem services programmes and national Governments by providing proactive, credible scientific advice on existing and emerging threats;

(e) A common scientific platform to strengthen the links between the various biodiversity- and ecosystem-related multilateral environmental agreements, building on and taking into account existing processes such as the liaison group of the biodiversity-related conventions.

### **III. Proposed focus areas for an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services<sup>3</sup>**

9. Three main focal areas have been identified for the platform based on recommendations from the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment independent evaluations and the international mechanism of scientific expertise on biodiversity consultation process:

(a) *Early warning, early lessons*: Monitoring trends and new scientific findings and proactively alerting organizations and Governments to emerging issues and threats to enable timely responses, in addition to providing rapid scientific analyses of such threats;

(b) *Catalysing knowledge*: Undertaking regular, independent, integrated assessments of changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services at multiple levels and rapid targeted assessments of specific issues that are linked with, build on or inform other relevant assessment processes, in addition to preparing for a second global assessment;

(c) *Policy support and outreach*: Supporting relevant stakeholders with the requisite scientific information:

(i) To improve understanding of changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services and their implications for human well-being;

(ii) To assist monitoring and reporting on biodiversity and ecosystem services changes;

(iii) To package and disseminate scientific information in a manner that responds to relevant stakeholders' needs.

10. Capacity-building will be an integral part of each component. The main focus will be on building the scientific expertise to undertake activities for each respective focal area.

11. It is envisaged that the activities undertaken by the platform will benefit from and contribute to continuing initiatives on biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being that are implemented outside the framework of the platform. This will be especially true for activities that will continue to be implemented by Millennium Ecosystem Assessment follow-up partners in their own capacity.

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<sup>3</sup> The platform's programme of work and budget is set out in document UNEP/IPBES/1/3, with detailed information on objectives, expected accomplishments and activities related to each of the focal areas.

#### **IV. Operational modalities of an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services**

12. The key operating principles of the platform are that it shall be:
- (a) Inclusive of intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental stakeholders and build upon existing networks of scientists and knowledge-holders;
  - (b) Scientifically independent, credible and subject to critical expert peer review as appropriate;
  - (c) Responsive to policy needs as identified by decision-making organizations at multiple levels, including biodiversity and ecosystems-related multilateral environmental agreements and relevant intergovernmental bodies, by being legitimate and policy-relevant without being policy-prescriptive;
  - (d) Underpinned by experiences of relevant assessment processes;
  - (e) Monitored from the outset with procedures for measuring its effectiveness.
13. The platform's proposed institutional structure is set out in document UNEP/IPBES/1/4. The structure should be lean, comprising members chosen with due regard to the principles of equitable geographical distribution and gender and discipline balance, and with clear terms of reference.
14. With regard to the platform's timeframe, it is suggested that a four-year cycle approach should be undertaken for the implementation of its work programme. This will enable stakeholders to evaluate and monitor the platform's progress, performance and success. Specific activities to be undertaken in each four-year period will be determined in plenary.
15. The present meeting brings together Governments and interested stakeholders for the first time to discuss the need, modalities, objectives, scope, programme of work, institutional arrangements and rules and procedures for the platform. It is proposed that participants should draw up a set of recommendations to be presented to the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its twenty-fifth session for its consideration.

## Annex II

### Programme of work and budget for an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services: Initial four-year period

#### I. Introduction

1. The work programme and associated budget of the intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services have been constructed in a modular way to facilitate donor support for particular components. The linkages between the components are, however, tight enough that removing any of them completely would be problematic. The initial four-year period of the intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services is expected to focus on three main areas:

- (a) *Early warning, early lessons*: monitoring trends and new scientific findings and proactively alerting organizations and Governments to emerging issues and threats to enable timely responses, in addition to providing rapid scientific analysis of such threats;
- (b) *Catalysing knowledge*: undertaking regular, independent, integrated assessments of changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services at multiple levels and rapid targeted assessments of specific issues that are linked with, build on, or inform other relevant processes, in addition to preparing for a second global assessment;
- (c) *Policy support and outreach*: supporting relevant stakeholders with the scientific information needed:
  - (i) To improve understanding of changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services and their implications for human well-being;
  - (ii) To assist monitoring and reporting on biodiversity and ecosystem services changes;
  - (iii) To package and disseminate scientific information in a manner that responds to relevant stakeholders' needs.

2. There are likely to be synergies between these elements. For example, science-driven activities under the focal area of “early warning, early lessons” will alert platform stakeholders to problems in biodiversity and ecosystem change that could be significant. These may be expected to form the basis for specific requests to explore particular issues in targeted assessments and policy advice. The same issues may then be evaluated in sub-global assessments and, later, in global assessments. Future global assessments will depend on strong, coordinated sub-global assessments. Scientific policy relevant briefs may also be requested on issues identified in both sub-global and global assessments.

#### II. Work programme for the initial four-year period

3. The platform's core mandate would be to provide authoritative, independent, credible, inclusive and internationally peer-reviewed, policy-relevant, scientific advice on changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services and their implications for human well-being at multiple levels. Its overarching goals would be to contribute to more effective and equitable decision-making that secures human well-being and strengthened scientific linkages between biodiversity and ecosystem-related multilateral environmental agreements and relevant intergovernmental bodies.

4. The provisional work programme for the initial four-year period is organized around the focal areas set out below. Capacity-building will be an integral part of the proposed activities and an important element in each case. A common element will be the inclusion of young researchers, particularly from developing countries, in all working groups and task forces, and the development of an appropriate mechanism for funding their participation.

- (a) *Early warning, early lessons*: Monitoring trends and new scientific findings and proactively alerting organizations and Governments to emerging issues and threats to enable timely responses and providing rapid scientific analysis of such threats. Communications will take the form of

scientific reports and alerts disseminated to multilateral environmental agreements, other United Nations bodies, national Governments and others.

*Objective:* To raise relevant stakeholders' awareness of emerging issues with the potential to have a significant impact on biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being.

*Expected accomplishments:* Scientific credible reports and alerts on emerging issues are produced and communicated widely in a timely manner.

*Specific activities:*

*Activity 1.1:* To assess the potential significance of emerging information on changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services that can significantly affect human well-being deriving from late-breaking scientific research results, monitoring agencies and other sources;

*Activity 1.2:* To produce policy-friendly and scientifically credible reports or alerts for distribution to member States and other partners on emerging issues involving biodiversity and ecosystem services that warrant further investigation or policy response.

(b) *Catalysing knowledge:* Undertaking regular, independent, integrated assessments of changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services at multiple levels and rapid targeted assessments of specific issues that are linked with, build on, or inform other relevant processes, in addition to preparing for a second global assessment.

*Objective:* To ensure that a common and uniform framework based on the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment framework is used by existing and new sub-global assessments.

*Expected accomplishments:*

- (i) Knowledge base on the relationships between biodiversity, ecosystem functioning, ecosystem services and human well-being at multiple levels is improved and made accessible to relevant stakeholders;
- (ii) Clearing-house mechanism to facilitate information exchange between sub-global assessments is established;
- (iii) Proposal for a global assessment is prepared.

*Specific activities:*

*Activity 2.1:* To facilitate and support policy relevant sub-global assessments building on the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment conceptual framework in pilot countries or regions, with emphasis on ecosystems, ecosystem services and regions insufficiently covered by the existing set of sub-global assessments, in close cooperation with Governments and regional bodies, including economic valuations and scenario development focused on supporting policymaking processes. Some sites will specifically tackle the gaps in scientific understanding of the links between ecosystem services and human well-being.

*Activity 2.2:* To support targeted assessments of specific issues at the request of platform stakeholders;

*Activity 2.3:* To merge the existing clearing-house mechanism developed by the global strategy for follow-up to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and to continue to develop it further;

*Activity 2.4:* To develop a proposal for a second global assessment.

(c) *Policy support and outreach:* To support relevant stakeholders with the scientific information needed to improve understanding of changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services and their implications for human well-being; to assist monitoring and reporting on biodiversity and ecosystem service changes; and to package and disseminate scientific information in a manner that responds to relevant stakeholders' needs.

*Objective:* To communicate knowledge on the links between biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being to support scientific agenda-setting and the mainstreaming of ecosystem services into decision-making.

*Expected accomplishments:*

- (i) Improved dialogue between the scientific and policy communities through support to the research agendas of international research programmes to reflect needs identified in the assessment process and to provide information on current and emerging policy needs;
- (ii) Enhanced support for national and international policymaking.

*Specific activities:**Activity 3.1:*

- (i) To generate and disseminate data on changes in biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being to improve national and international environmental accounting;
- (ii) To inform better national and international environmental and development policy;
- (iii) To further the development of incentive and regulatory mechanisms for sustainable ecosystem service use;
- (iv) To enable corporations and non-governmental organizations to assess better the risks and opportunities associated with biodiversity and ecosystem services change;
- (v) To support guidance, certification, and voluntary standards for ecosystem services stewardship.

*Activity 3.2:* To work with other relevant groups to develop uniform and robust measures for the collection, use and exchange of geo-referenced data relating to biodiversity, ecosystem services and social and economic performance that will enhance the ability of the platform partners to track changes in the capacity of ecosystems to supply services and the attendant impacts on human well-being.

### III. Preliminary budget

5. The initial four-year period is intended to involve what could be termed a relatively “light touch”. The aim is to prove the value of the platform to stakeholders and the estimated costs are the minimum required to do this effectively. The preliminary budget is presented in the annex to the present note. An estimated budget is offered separately for each of the platform’s main areas of activity, together with the costs of managing and overseeing the platform. A line item has been added to cover the cost of a performance review at the end of the initial four-year period. In all cases, estimated costs depend on the number of specific activities involved and the intensity of work in each activity.

6. In addition to agreeing on the provisional work programme and budget, participants at the present meeting will be requested to discuss and reach agreement on a funding strategy containing the following three elements:

- (a) Seed funding by interested donors to enable the initial cycle to be launched;
- (b) System of member subscriptions and national contributions;
- (c) Modality of managing funds (e.g., a trust fund).

## Annex

### Preliminary budget for an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services

(Thousands of United States dollars)

<i>Component</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Year 1</i>	<i>Year 2</i>	<i>Year 3</i>	<i>Year 4</i>	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>Total</i>
Early warning, early lessons	1.1	240	240	240	240	960	
Early warning, early lessons	1.2	120	120	120	120	480	<b>1 440</b>
Catalysing knowledge <sup>4</sup>	2.1	600	1 400	1 400	1 400	4 800	
Catalysing knowledge	2.2	240	240	240	240	960	
Catalysing knowledge	2.3	400	400	400	400	1 600	<b>7 360</b>
Policy support and outreach	3.1	220	220	220	190	850	
Policy support and outreach	3.2	160	160	160	160	640	<b>1 490</b>
Capacity-building <sup>5</sup>		750	1 000	1 000	1 000	3 750	<b>3 750</b>
Secretariat operation		240	360	360	360	1 320	
Plenary		800	0	0	800	1 600	
Advisory and supporting bodies <sup>6</sup>		300	300	300	300	1 200	<b>4 120</b>
Initial four-year review					275	275	<b>275</b>
<b>Total estimated costs for initial four-year period</b>							<b>18 435</b>

4 It is assumed that there will be two sub-global assessments at the national level in years one and three and one regional (transboundary) sub-global assessment in years two to four. National sub-global assessments are assumed to be 50 per cent funded by national Governments and 50 per cent funded by the platform. International sub-global assessments are assumed to be entirely funded by the platform.

5 Partial sponsorship of young scientists, particularly from developing countries, to engage in activities of the platform used to leverage funds from national sources.

6 Includes cost of (partial) secondment of chair or co-chairs and outreach.

## Annex III

### **Governance structure and secretariat functions for an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services**

#### **I. Introduction**

1. The key operating principles of the future intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services are that it shall be:
  - (a) Inclusive of intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental stakeholders and building upon existing networks of scientists and knowledge-holders;
  - (b) Scientifically independent, credible and subject to critical expert peer review as appropriate;
  - (c) Responsive to policy needs as identified by decision-making organizations at multiple levels, including biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements, by being legitimate and policy-relevant without being policy-prescriptive;
  - (d) Underpinned by experiences of relevant assessment processes;
  - (e) Monitored from the outset with procedures for measuring its effectiveness.
2. Its governance structure should be defined in accordance with those operating principles. It should also be cost-efficient and should avoid creating additional administrative burdens wherever possible.
3. Options for the platform's governance structure and secretariat functions, developed on the basis of comments received from Governments and relevant stakeholders to date, are presented below. It is proposed that participants at the present meeting should consider the various options presented below and agree on appropriate institutional arrangements that meet the needs of Governments and all stakeholders while adhering to the key operating principles listed above.

#### **II. Legal status**

4. Regarding the platform's legal status, options might include the following:
  - (a) The platform is established as an intergovernmental body whose status is distinct from the existing intergovernmental organizations and is not institutionally connected to any of them. It might be established by a decision of an intergovernmental conference;
  - (b) The platform is established as an intergovernmental body whose status is distinct from the existing intergovernmental organizations but is institutionally linked with one or more of the existing international organizations (e.g., through the provision of the secretariat or administrative services therefor). It might be established by a decision of an intergovernmental conference or by a decision of an existing intergovernmental organization or concurrent decisions of two or more intergovernmental organizations;
  - (c) The platform is established as an intergovernmental body, which is a subsidiary body of an existing intergovernmental organization. It might be established by a decision of the governing body of an existing intergovernmental organization;
  - (d) The platform is established as a body in which intergovernmental and non-governmental entities are combined and is distinct from the existing intergovernmental organizations. It might be established by a decision of an intergovernmental or other international conference;
  - (e) The platform is established as a body in which intergovernmental and non-governmental entities are combined, and it is a subsidiary body of an existing intergovernmental organization. It might be established by a decision of the governing body of an existing intergovernmental organization.

### III. Plenary

5. It is expected that there will be forum within the platform where all participating Governments and relevant organizations and stakeholders meet in a plenary setting. Irrespective of the name of a plenary meeting, its functions might include the following:

- (a) Overseeing the platform's operation;
- (b) Taking decisions on the platform's institutional arrangements;
- (c) Adopting a programme of work, including a list of topics to be addressed by the platform;
- (d) Approving the budget;
- (e) Reviewing the implementation of the programme of work, including financial and operational reports prepared by the platform's secretariat;
- (f) Reviewing, adopting or approving major reports or executive summaries;
- (g) Adopting the platform's rules and procedure, including the rules of procedure of meetings and financial rules.

6. Options for the modality of the platform and its plenary meeting might include the following:

- (a) The platform is open to all States that are members of the United Nations or specialized agencies. It comprises those States that have signified their intention to participate in the platform. All those Governments meet in plenary and each Government has one vote. It is open also to relevant organizations and stakeholders who may participate in the proceedings of plenary meetings without the right to vote;
- (b) The platform is open to all States that are members of the United Nations or specialized agencies, in addition to relevant organizations and stakeholders. Each Government has one vote. The relevant organizations and stakeholders also have qualified votes, the total number of which should not exceed the total number of votes of participating Governments.

### IV. Executive body

7. To assist the work of the plenary and to oversee the implementation of policy guidance during its intersessional period, a particular type of executive body may be considered. Possible functions of such an executive body might include the following:

- (a) Identifying donors and partnership arrangements for the implementation of activities in the initial four-year period;
- (b) Overseeing the implementation of the initial four-year period of activities according to the principles and procedures established by the plenary;
- (c) Overseeing the management of financial resources and reporting thereon to the plenary.

8. Options for such an executive body might include the following:

- (a) A bureau, comprising the chair of the platform and other members elected by the platform at its plenary meeting.<sup>7</sup> The members of the bureau will include scientists and other stakeholders nominated by Governments. The chair will invite the representatives of the relevant multilateral environmental agreements and other intergovernmental bodies in the field of biological diversity and ecosystem services to attend bureau meetings.
- (b) An executive board, comprising members appointed by the plenary meeting. The term of each member of the executive board will be four years, renewable once. Members will include government representatives, representatives of major groups, scientific organizations and the private sector. Representatives of relevant United Nations bodies and multilateral environmental agreements will be ex officio members. Geographical distribution and gender balance will be duly taken into

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<sup>7</sup> The actual number will be determined by the plenary.

account in appointing members of the board. The chair of the platform will serve also as the chair of the board. The board will meet as necessary.

## V. Scientific advisory group

9. To support the functions of the platform plenary and to undertake scientific work, a scientific advisory group might be established to oversee the platform's scientific credibility. The group might comprise prominent scientific experts chosen in manner taking into account regional, gender and discipline balance for a given term (e.g., four years, renewable once). Their functions might include the following:

- (a) Overseeing the peer review process to ensure the highest levels of scientific quality and credibility for all products delivered by the platform;
- (b) Selecting experts for and establishment of working groups and task forces as needed to undertake activities under the initial four-year period work programme;
- (c) Identifying emerging issues warranted for further scientific analysis by the platform's working groups or task forces;
- (d) Certifying the scientific credibility of reports and findings;
- (e) Ensuring broad international scientific consensus on issues under consideration by wide consultation;
- (f) Overseeing the implementation of the initial four-year period of activities according to the principles and procedures established by the plenary;
- (g) Approving specific procedures related to the conduct of assessments and other studies;
- (h) Considering and deciding whether reports submitted by the working groups and task forces should be classified as accepted, adopted or approved.

## VI. Secretariat

10. The platform's secretariat will be provided by the existing international organization or organizations to support the platform's undertakings and the provision of administrative services therefor. Its functions might include the following:

- (a) Supporting the platform's day-to-day operations and coordinating the implementation of activities during the initial four-year period.
- (b) Setting up monitoring procedures for measuring the effectiveness of activities during the initial period, used from the outset for programme evaluation, development and continuation;
- (c) Ensuring coordination between platform working groups;
- (d) Liaising with participating Governments and international organizations on platform matters;
- (e) Organizing meetings of relevant bodies of the platform;
- (f) Proposing the budget;
- (g) Managing a trust fund for the platform;
- (h) Publicizing and disseminating platform reports to the wider scientific and policymaker community, including translation of summaries into all United Nations official languages;
- (i) Establishing a platform website.

## Annex IV

### **Rules and procedures of an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services**

#### **I. Introduction**

1. Upon its establishment, and subject to its governance structure, the operation of the intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services will be guided by a set of rules and procedures, which might include the following:

- (a) Rules of procedure;
- (b) Procedures governing reports;
- (c) Rules governing administration.

2. Key points regarding the above rules and procedures are highlighted below.

#### **II. Rules of procedure of the platform**

3. Rules of procedure will be necessary for meetings of the platform. Subject to the platform's legal status and institutional arrangements, options might include the following:

- (a) Preparing a new set of rules of procedure for the platform;
- (b) Applying the rules of procedure of an existing intergovernmental body for the purpose of the platform;
- (c) A combination of the above two options.

##### **A. Participation**

4. The modality of participation in the platform, as determined by its governance structure, will need to be reflected in the rules of procedure. Consideration should be given to the following potential members when considering the modality of participation in the platform (see also document UNEP/IPBES/1/4, paragraph 6):

- (a) States that are members of the United Nations or its specialized agencies;
- (b) Regional economic integration organizations that are members of specialized agencies of the United Nations;
- (c) United Nations bodies, funds, programmes, its specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency;
- (d) Other intergovernmental organizations and entities, including multilateral environmental agreements;
- (e) Any other body or agency, whether national or international, governmental or non-governmental, which is qualified in matters covered by the platform (such as scientific and research institutions, non-governmental organizations representing major groups, or organizations representing the private sector).

5. While bearing in mind the principle that the platform should be inclusive of intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental stakeholders and building upon existing networks of scientists and knowledge-holders, the modality of participation in the platform by those potential members listed above might be distinct and differentiated, particularly in respect of decision-making procedures.

##### **B. Observers**

6. Depending upon the platform's membership, categories of entities that participate in meetings of the platform as observers might be identified. Rules might be set out to establish the modality of participation by observers in platform meetings.

### **C. Invited experts**

7. Should it become necessary, invitations to meetings of the platform or those of its subsidiary bodies might be extended to a limited number of experts who have specific expertise in issues of relevance to the platform. Specific procedures, if so required, might be set out for this purpose.

### **D. Meetings**

8. Meetings of the platform might normally be held at the seat of the platform's secretariat. The arrangements for several plenary meetings of the platform will need to be identified, including how often those meetings will take place (e.g., every two or three years after the initial meeting).

### **E. Agenda**

9. Rules might be set out to identify the process for the preparation of the provisional agenda for each meeting, for example, by the secretariat under the guidance of the Chair. Standard categories of items for the provisional agenda might be listed in such rules. The timing of the distribution of the provisional agenda (e.g., six weeks before the meeting) might be set out, in addition to procedures for adopting the provisional agenda (e.g., addition, deletion or amendment of items).

### **F. Representation**

10. Subject to the governance structure and membership, rules governing the representation of each participating entity might be set out (e.g., composition of a delegation).

### **G. Officers**

11. A chair might be elected by participants at the platform meeting. Alternatively, two or more co-chairs might be elected. The chair or co-chairs might be assisted by other officers (e.g., vice-chairs and a rapporteur). Those officers might serve as the bureau of the platform.

12. A term for each official should be specified (e.g., for the period from the beginning of a meeting to the next meeting when new officials are elected).

13. Rules might be set out to limit the terms of officials, for example, no more than two consecutive terms.

14. In electing officers, geographical representation should be taken into account. The basis for such geographical representation might be the five United Nations regions or other formulae as applied in specialized agencies or other intergovernmental arrangements.

15. The powers of the chair or co-chairs might be specified in the rules, together with the functions of other officers (e.g., vice-chairs) in the absence of the chair or co-chairs.

### **H. Subsidiary bodies**

16. Some types of subsidiary bodies, including ad hoc bodies, might be established to assist the platform's work (such as task forces and working groups). The modality of participation in and operation of such subsidiary bodies might be specified either in the terms of reference for each body or set out in rules in a general manner.

### **I. Secretariat**

17. Irrespective of institutional arrangements that might be made for a secretariat, the head of the secretariat will be required to arrange for the provision of staff and services required by the platform and its subsidiary bodies within available resources. Such services might include, among other things, making arrangements for relevant meetings, ensuring necessary coordination with the secretariats of other relevant international bodies and collection, translation, reproduction, distribution, publication and preservation of meeting documents.

**J. Conduct of business**

18. As a general rule, meetings will be held in public, unless decided otherwise.
19. A quorum might be specified to open or permit the debate to proceed, or for a decision to be taken. For the purpose of determining quorum, consideration might be given to the circumstances of a regional economic integration organization, where applicable.
20. Rules governing the power of the chair will be set out. These might include the power of the chair to declare the opening and closing of the meeting, preside at the meeting, ensure the observance of the rules of procedure, accord the right to speak, call a speaker to order, rule on a point of order, put questions to a vote and announce a decision.
21. Rules governing motions and procedures dealing with proposals or amendments to proposals might be set out.

**K. Voting**

22. Subject to the platform's governance structure and the modality of participation therein, each entity so qualified might have one vote.
23. Consideration should be given to the circumstances of a regional economic integration organization on matters within its competence and exercising of its right to vote where applicable.
24. Rules governing decision-making on both procedural and substantive matters, together with procedures concerning the voting process, might be set out.

**L. Elections**

25. All elections might be held by secret ballot, unless otherwise decided.
26. Rules governing elections processes will be set out.

**M. Languages and official records**

27. The official language or languages of platform meetings will be specified (e.g., one or all of the six official languages of the United Nations).
28. Arrangements for translation of official documents and interpretation of statements might be specified.

**N. Amendment to the rules of procedure**

29. The rules of procedure might be amended in the same manner as they are adopted.

**III. Procedures governing reports of the platform**

30. Elements for the possible procedures for the preparation, review, acceptance, approval, adoption and publication of platform reports, modelled on the existing arrangements (such as those under the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), might include the following:

**A. Overall process for platform reports**

31. Such reports are published materials containing the full scientific analysis of biodiversity and ecosystem services changes. Each report may comprise two or more sections including:
  - (a) Summary for decision makers;
  - (b) Optional technical summary;
  - (c) Individual chapters and their executive summaries.
32. Methodology reports are published materials, which provide practical guidelines for decision making.

33. To ensure proper preparation and review, the following steps will be taken:
- (a) Compilation of governmental and non-governmental focal points and nominees for coordinating lead authors, lead authors, expert reviewers and review editors;
  - (b) Selection of coordinating lead authors, lead authors, expert reviewers and review editors;
  - (c) Preparation of a zero-order draft report;
  - (d) Expert review of a zero-order draft report;
  - (e) Preparation of the first-order draft report;
  - (f) Government or expert (peer) review of the first-order draft report;
  - (g) Preparation of the final report;
  - (h) Review and acceptance, adoption or approval of the final report at the plenary.<sup>8</sup>

## **B. Compilation of nominees for authors, reviewers and review editors**

34. The secretariat will request all Governments participating in the platform and relevant organizations working in the field of biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being to identify appropriate experts to act as coordinating lead authors, lead authors, expert reviewers or review editors.

35. To facilitate the identification of appropriate experts, Governments and non-governmental stakeholders should designate focal points. The composition of the experts identified by the focal points should ensure, where necessary, balanced geographical representation, including balance between developed countries, developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Information on these experts will be maintained by the secretariat and be available to all participants in the platform.

## **C. Selection of authors, reviewers and review editors**

36. The executive body (e.g., bureau or an executive board) or the science advisory group will select coordinating lead authors, lead authors and review editors from those experts nominated by Governments and participating organizations. The composition of experts in all categories will reflect the need to aim for a range of views, expertise, peer recognition, gender and geographical representation, taking into account various forms of knowledge. The coordinating lead authors and lead authors may enlist other experts as contributing authors to assist in their work.

## **D. Preparation of draft reports**

37. The coordinating lead authors and lead authors will prepare the zero-order draft. Experts who wish to contribute material for consideration in the first draft should submit it directly to the lead authors. Contributions will be supported as far as possible with references from the peer-reviewed and internationally available literature, and with copies of any unpublished material cited. Clear indications of how to access the latter will be included in the contributions. For material available in electronic format only, a hard copy should be archived and the location where such material may be accessed should be cited.

38. In preparing the first draft, and at subsequent stages of revision after review, lead authors should clearly identify disparate views for which there is significant scientific or technical support, together with the relevant arguments. Technical summaries provided will be prepared under the guidance of relevant working group.

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<sup>8</sup> For the purpose of subparagraph (h) above, “acceptance” signifies that the material has not been subjected to line-by-line discussion and agreement, but represents a comprehensive, objective and balanced view of the subject matter. “Adoption” is a process of endorsement section by section (i.e., not line-by-line). “Approval” signifies that the material has been subjected to line-by-line discussion and agreement.

## **E. Review**

39. The purpose of the review process is to ensure that platform reports present a comprehensive, objective and balanced view of the current state of knowledge.

40. Three general principles should govern the review process of the report, which should include the latest scientific findings as comprehensively as possible:

- (a) Circulation will aim to involve as many experts as possible, with particular attention to independent experts (not involved in the preparation of the document) from a broad range of countries;
- (b) The review should be objective, open and transparent;
- (c) Appropriate experts will review material related to scientific, traditional, local, institutional and other forms of knowledge.

41. At least six weeks should be allowed for review by experts and Governments. All written expert and Government review comments will be made available to reviewers upon request during the review process and will be retained in an open archive in a location determined by the platform secretariat.

## **F. Approval and acceptance of summaries**

42. Summary sections of reports accepted by the platform plenary will comprise the global and sub-global summaries for decision makers. It will be subject to simultaneous review by both experts and Governments and to a final line-by-line approval at a session of the plenary. The global and sub-global summaries for decision makers will be prepared concurrently with the main report. Approval of the summaries for decision makers signifies that they are consistent with the factual material contained in the reports. Coordinating lead authors may be requested to provide technical assistance in ensuring that the documents are consistent. The summaries for decision makers should be formally and prominently described as: "Reports of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services".

## **IV. Procedures governing administration of the platform**

43. Appropriate administrative and financial arrangements will need to be made for the platform, which might be arranged in conjunction with the institutional arrangements of the platform secretariat.

44. In the event that the platform secretariat is provided by one or more organizations, administrative and financial arrangements (such as the establishment and management of a trust fund for the platform) might be made in accordance with the relevant rules and regulations of the respective organizations (e.g., in the case of the United Nations, its financial rules and regulations, staff rules and administrative instructions).

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