



Convention on Biological Diversity

Distr.
GENERAL

UNEP/CBD/COP/11/INF/51
4 October 2012

ENGLISH ONLY

CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Eleventh meeting

Hyderabad, India, 8-19 October 2012

Item 6.2 of the provisional agenda*

VIEWS FROM PARTIES AND ORGANIZATIONS ON COLLABORATION WITH THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL SCIENCE-POLICY PLATFORM ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. At its sixteenth meeting, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice initiated a consultation process on how requests from the Convention would be conveyed to IPBES and requested the Executive Secretary to prepare proposals on that basis.
2. In response to notification SCBD/STTM/DC/RH/79812 (2012-067), inviting Parties, other Governments, relevant organizations and indigenous and local communities to provide views on the process, under the Convention on Biological Diversity, on how requests from the Convention would be conveyed to IPBES contributions were received from Armenia, Australia, Canada, European Union, Mexico, Norway and the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Center (UNEP-WCMC).
3. In addition, a contribution from Japan was received after the deadline for submissions, which was therefore not taken into account in preparing the note by the Executive Secretary on collaboration with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (UNEP/CBD/COP/11/19/Add.1).
4. The submissions are reproduced in their original form in the annex to this document.

* UNEP/CBD/COP/11/1.

Armenia

From: Artashes Ziroyan [<mailto:artashes.ziroyan@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Friday, June 22, 2012 4:06 AM
To: secretariat
Subject: Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias Executive Secretary Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Dear Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias,

Many thanks for your message. In its recommendation XVI/1 (“Ways and means to improve the effectiveness of the subsidiary body and options for collaboration with the intergovernmental science policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services”), the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), at its sixteenth meeting invited Parties, other Governments, relevant organizations and indigenous and local communities to submit views on the process, under the Convention on Biological Diversity, on how requests from the Convention would be conveyed to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). SBSTTA further requested the Executive Secretary to prepare, based on these submissions, proposals for the consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its eleventh meeting. The note prepared to facilitate the consideration on this issue (document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/2) discusses options for the engagement with IPBES (paragraphs 61-66) and lists in Annex 1 some considerations that might be taken into account in developing an effective interaction with IPBES.

I want to inform you, that we haven’t any comment about Convention’s requests to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem.

Australia

CBD NOTIFICATION No. 2012-067

Submission of views on the process, under the Convention on Biological Diversity, on how requests from the Convention would be conveyed to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

Recommendation XVI/1 of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), invites Parties, other Governments, relevant organizations and indigenous and local communities to submit views on the process, under the Convention on Biological Diversity, on how requests from the Convention would be conveyed to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES); and requests the Executive Secretary to prepare, based on these submissions, proposals for the consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its eleventh meeting.

Australia welcomes the opportunity to provide comment on how requests from the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) should be made to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

There were extensive discussions at the sixteenth meeting of Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA16) on this issue. The main point of difference was whether the Conference of the Parties should make requests to IPBES or if SBSTTA should be authorised to make such requests.

Australia proposes a third option that might bridge these differences and present a possible solution for the consideration Parties at CoP11.

Option

The first requests from CBD to IPBES for advice are likely to be primarily associated with the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

- It will be most effective if requests of this nature are forwarded to IPBES at the earliest possible time. CoP11 meets prior to SBSTTA17. As such it is most efficient for CoP11 to make these requests directly to IPBES.

SBSTTA's tasks between CoPs are largely at the direction of the CoP.

- It may be appropriate that the CoP identify those items for SBSTTA's attention where input to SBSTTA from IPBES could be useful in completing the task. This would provide the CoP with a broad oversight of the extent and nature of requests from SBSTTA to IPBES, while still facilitating a direct working relationship between SBSTTA and IPBES. Such an approach allows SBSTTA to make some direct requests of IPBES and provides assurance to the CoP that SBSTTA will not overburden IPBES. It also recognises that SBSTTA is best placed to take into account what elements of its task/s set by the CoP can be undertaken using normal SBSTTA processes and what elements might benefit from IPBES input.

Canada

Notification SCBD/STTM/DC/RH/79812 (2012-067)

Views on the process under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on how requests from the Convention would be conveyed to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

Submission from Canada

30 June 2012

In Canada's view, establishment of the IPBES has considerable potential to strengthen the scientific basis for effective action related to the Convention and its *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020*, including the *Aichi Biodiversity Targets*. The CBD Conference of the Parties (COP) should take advantage of this important new development by formulating requests related to the four main functions of the IPBES as described in Section 1 of Appendix 1 of UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9, the *Report of the Second Session of the Plenary Meeting to Determine Modalities and Institutional Arrangements for an IPBES* (Panama City, 16-21 April 2012):

- identifying and prioritizing key scientific information needed for policymakers at appropriate scales and catalysing efforts to generate new knowledge;
- performing regular and timely assessments of knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services and their interlinkages;
- supporting policy formulation and implementation by identifying policy-relevant tools and methodologies, such as those arising from assessments, to enable decision makers to gain access to those tools and methodologies and, where necessary, promoting and catalysing their further development; and
- prioritizing key capacity-building needs to improve the science-policy interface at appropriate levels and catalysing financing for such capacity-building activities by providing a forum with conventional and potential sources of funding.

Canada notes that the IPBES itself will be seeking views from its members on the process for soliciting requests to carry out assessments, and for prioritizing requests once they have been received. According to Appendix 1 of UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9:

Focusing on Government needs and based on priorities established by the Plenary, the Platform responds to requests from Governments, including those conveyed to it by multilateral environmental agreements related to biodiversity and ecosystem services as determined by their respective governing bodies. The Plenary welcomes inputs and suggestions from, and the participation of, United Nations bodies related to biodiversity and ecosystem services as determined by their respective governing bodies... To facilitate this, and to ensure that the work programme of the Platform is focused and efficient, a process to receive and prioritize requests, inputs and suggestions will be established by the Plenary.

Members of the Platform and Parties to the CBD have an opportunity to coordinate their responses to these two processes. In Canada's view, requests submitted by multiple members of the Platform – such as through multilateral environmental agreements such as the CBD - should be encouraged and given priority, with requests that respond to needs of multiple agreements given highest priority. When the CBD submits requests it should consider needs of other biodiversity-related conventions,

recognizing that the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020* represents a useful flexible framework that is relevant to all biodiversity-related conventions.

The CBD may wish to engage the Chairs of the Scientific Advisory Bodies of the biodiversity-related conventions (CSAB) in discussion of ways to coordinate the submission of requests across conventions. Canada notes that the Panama IPBES meeting agreed to create a Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (paragraph 16(b) of Appendix 1 of UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9), and that the chairs of the scientific subsidiary bodies of the multilateral environmental agreements related to biodiversity and ecosystem services and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change will have observer status on this Panel.

This outcome of the Panama meeting is consistent with COP Decision VIII/10, Annex III, which states that the CBD's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) "shall cooperate" with other relevant organizations to build on their experience and knowledge, and specified that the SBSTTA Chair may represent the SBSTTA at meetings of other relevant organizations.

While observer status for the Chair of the SBSTTA and other scientific subsidiary bodies on the IPBES Panel is a good start, given the many possibilities for mutual supportive activities and synergies between the CBD and the IPBES, Canada's view is that the CBD should establish a bilateral agreement with IPBES to affirm respective roles and responsibilities and highlight areas of cooperation. Such an agreement should specifically address issues related to submission of requests, including coordination of requests from multiple multilateral environmental agreements.

The relationship between the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) provides an indication as to how the CBD and the IPBES may interact. Governments and policy-makers at all levels, including the UNFCCC, are the primary audience for IPCC products. The UNFCCC both requests information from the IPCC and actively uses the information that the IPCC produces. For example, products prepared by the IPCC in response to a UNFCCC request include the:

- *Revised 1996 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* (IPCC/OECD/ IEA, 1997);
- *2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* (IPCC, 2006)
- *Good Practice Guidance and Uncertainty Management in National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* (IPCC, 2000); and
- *Good Practice Guidance for Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry* (IPCC, 2003)
- *2013 Supplement to the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories: Wetlands* (currently under preparation)
- *2013 Revised Supplementary Methods and Good Practice Guidance Arising from the Kyoto Protocol* (currently under preparation)

The UNFCCC also frequently refers to the scientific conclusions of the IPCC in its decisions. Most recently, the UNFCCC has identified IPCC reports, including the forthcoming Fifth Assessment Report, as one of the main sources of information that will inform the 2013-15 UNFCCC review of the long-term global goal to maintain global warming to below 2°C.

The UNFCCC has established its own Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) as a permanent subsidiary body whose task is to advise the UNFCCC COP on scientific, technological and methodological matters. The UNFCCC SBSTA plays an important role as the link between the scientific information provided by expert sources such as the IPCC on the one hand, and the policy-oriented needs of the COP on the other. It works closely with the IPCC, sometimes

requesting specific information or reports from it, and also collaborates with other relevant international organizations that share the common objective of sustainable development.

Canada foresees the CBD SBSTTA playing a similar role as a link between the IPBES and the CBD COP. As noted above, the COP has already directed SBSTTA to interact directly with independent scientific bodies such as the IPCC and the IPBES. An early example was when the SBSTTA, in recommendation VI/7, invited the IPCC to contribute to an assessment of the inter-linkages between biological diversity and climate change, by preparing a technical paper and identifying experts. The IPCC agreed to this request, and produced IPCC Technical Paper V, *Climate Change and Biodiversity*. This was an important contribution by the IPCC to efforts of CBD Parties to develop scientific advice on ways to integrate biodiversity considerations into the implementation of the UNFCCC.

Canada notes that there are similarities between the functions of the CBD SBSTTA and the IPBES. This further reinforces the need for direct links between these two bodies so as to create synergies and avoid duplication of effort. The SBSTTA and the IPBES both have responsibilities for preparing assessments of knowledge on biodiversity, including on new and emerging issues. Following the COP-8 decision (VIII/10, Annex III, Appendix A) that the functions of the SBSTTA include identifying “new and emerging issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity”, COP-9 (Decision IX/29, paragraph 12) decided on the following criteria for prioritizing proposals for emerging issues:

- Relevance of the issue to the implementation of the objectives of the Convention and its existing programmes of work;
- New evidence of unexpected and significant impacts on biodiversity;
- Urgency of addressing the issue/imminence of the risk caused by the issue to the effective implementation of the Convention as well as the magnitude of actual and potential impact on biodiversity;
- Actual geographic coverage and potential spread, including rate of spread, of the identified issue relating to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity;
- Evidence of the absence or limited availability of tools to limit or mitigate the negative impacts of the identified issue on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity;
- Magnitude of actual and potential impact of the identified issue on human well-being; and
- Magnitude of actual and potential impact of the identified issue on productive sectors and economic well-being as related to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

The CBD COP may wish to bring these criteria to the attention of the IPBES, and could summarize its own experiences related to identification of new and emerging issues.

Another consideration related to how requests would be conveyed by the CBD to the IPBES is that the IPBES, in its preparations for an initial work programme (Section D, Annex II, UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9), will develop a draft conceptual framework document that is informed by its review of existing assessments and draws on existing conceptual frameworks. The COP may wish to bring to the attention of the IPBES that the *Aichi Targets* constitute an important existing conceptual framework, so as to increase the likelihood that the work of the IPBES will contribute toward their attainment.

IPBES could also help implement the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020* by contributing to an assessment of mid-term progress toward achievement of the *Aichi Targets*, including an identification of gaps and policy options. In this assessment the IPBES could consider the effectiveness of the types of measures taken in accordance with the provisions of the Convention. Work done by the IPBES in this regard would also represent a significant contribution to the next edition of the CBD’s Global Biodiversity Outlook. Possible time constraints associated with this work, and possible limitations in

IPBES' capacity to respond to such a request, further indicate the desirability of a formal agreement between the CBD and the IPBES.

EU submission to the CBD notification 2012-067 on views on the process, under the Convention on Biological Diversity, on how requests from the Convention would be conveyed to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

2 July 2012

The EU and its Member States are of the view that the Conference of the Parties, as the decision making body of the Convention, should provide other Convention bodies with the overall mandate as well as specific guidance on how to interact with IPBES. The overall framework for cooperation, including submission of requests, should therefore be decided by the Conference of the Parties at its 11th meeting.

In order not to make the process for submitting requests and feeding the results back into the CBD processes too long and complicated, the Conference of the Parties of the CBD should provide SBSTTA and other CBD bodies with a mandate which is sufficiently broad in order to allow them to submit requests to IPBES on issues related to the mandate of IPBES to this body in the period between COP sessions, if the need arises.

The COP mandate might need to be specified along the following lines:

- SBSTTA should be allowed to send requests directly to IPBES on any scientific, technical or technological topic which COP has requested SBSTTA to consider.
- SBSTTA should be allowed to send requests directly to IPBES as regards proposals for new and emerging issues in order that SBSTTA can make better informed recommendations to COP based on the criteria set out in decision IX/29 para 12.

The CBD Secretariat could act as a facilitator in the interaction between SBSTTA, COP and IPBES, implementing decisions and requests made by COP and SBSTTA. A process might be considered where the COP or the SBSTTA Bureau with practical support by the CBD Secretariat collects and prepares a list of possible elements for requests to IPBES.

The COP should be able to make full use of the opportunity for making decisions based on assessments and other materials or tools provided by IPBES.

It is important to keep in mind that IPBES is an independent body, and that the Platform will establish its own procedures for handling and prioritising requests submitted by Governments directly or indirectly, including from CBD and other Conventions and international processes.

Views on the process for conveying the CBD's requests to IPBES

The Government of Japan

In accordance with the CBD notification No. 2012-067, the Government of Japan hereby submits its views on the process for conveying the Convention's requests to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) as follows:

Since CBD's requests to IPBES should contribute to improving efficiency in the operation of CBD, it is important to ensure the clarification of respective roles between CBD and IPBES, and to avoid unnecessary overlapping of tasks.

A decision on a request from CBD to IPBES should be made after the rules of procedure and work programs of IPBES are confirmed. Such a request should be based on a decision by the COP as the highest decision making body.

Japan suggests that COP, beyond its twelfth meeting, makes a decision to ensure the following process;

1. SBSTTA considers downsizing and termination of CBD works which are related and overlapped with those of IPBES, as well as what CBD should request to IPBES.
2. SBSTTA recommends what to request to IPBES.
3. COP decision.
4. CBD, in the name of the Executive Director, submits the request to IPBES.



C O N A B I O

Dirección de Enlace y Asuntos Internacionales

OF. DEAI-180/2012

Página 1 de 2

México D.F., 05 de junio de 2012

Dr. Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias
Secretario Ejecutivo
Convenio sobre la Diversidad Biológica
Presente

Estimado Braulio:

Hago referencia a la notificación 2012-067 mediante la cual invita a las Partes a presentar opiniones sobre el proceso, en que el CBD pudiera presentar peticiones ante la Plataforma Intergubernamental Científico- Normativa sobre Diversidad Biológica y Servicios de los Ecosistemas (IPBES).

Al respecto, consideramos que en la determinación de este proceso se deberán tomar en cuenta los siguientes elementos:

1. Para México es importante promover la colaboración entre el SBSTTA y la IPBES, reconociendo que la participación del SBSTTA es tanto de usuario como de proveedor de información a la Plataforma.
2. El Plan Estratégico 2011-2020 y las Metas de Aichi son un buen marco de referencia para facilitar la colaboración entre ambas instancias.
3. Esta colaboración siempre deberá tener claro que las limitaciones y deficiencias del SBSTTA deberán ser resueltas por el SBSTTA, dentro del ámbito del CBD.
4. En cuanto al proceso mediante el cual SBSTTA pudiera presentar solicitudes a la IPBES, sugerimos tomar en cuenta lo siguientes elementos y recomendaciones:
 - a) Que durante la Segunda Sesión Plenaria de la IPBES (Panamá, Panamá del 16 al 21 de abril), se determinó que el Plenario de la Plataforma, responderá a solicitudes de información de los gobiernos, **incluidas las transmitidas por los Acuerdos Ambientales Multilaterales relacionados con la diversidad biológica**. Sin embargo, el Plenario de IPBES aún no ha definido el proceso mediante el cual se recibirán las solicitudes de información que pudieran ser incluidas en su Programa de Trabajo y el establecimiento de un orden de prioridad. En este contexto, consideramos que en principio, el CBD deberá esperar a que IPBES defina este proceso.
 - b) Que la Conferencia de las Partes en su 11ava Reunión deberá, delegar al SBSTTA la facultad de identificar temas de cooperación con IPBES para implementar los



C O N A B I O

Dirección de Enlace y Asuntos Internacionales

OF. DEAI-180/2012

Página 2 de 2

objetivos del Convenio y el Plan Estratégico 2011-2020 y las Metas de Aichi Nagoya y remitir las solicitudes a la IPBES.

- c) Que el SBSTTA incluya a la colaboración con la IPBES como un punto de agenda permanente.
- d) Que el SBSTTA Defina un procedimiento (*ad hoc*) similar al de temas nuevos y emergentes (Decisión IX/29, párrafo 12) para que las Partes propongan temas de interés para la colaboración con la Plataforma, que el Secretario Ejecutivo los compile y que los ponga a consideración del Órgano Subsidiario.
- e) Una vez definidos los temas de interés del SBSTTA para colaborar con la IPBES, que el Secretario Ejecutivo del CBD lo transmita al Secretario Ejecutivo de la IPBES para consideración de IPBES de forma directa o bien, a través del mecanismo que la Plataforma determine.

Sin otro particular, aprovecho la ocasión para enviarle un cordial saludo.

Atentamente,

Dra. Andrea Cruz Angón
Firma por ausencia del
Biól. Hesiquio Benítez Díaz
Director de Enlace y Asuntos Internacionales.

ACA/JAB/lprc

Cce. Mtro. Santiago Lorenzo Alonso, Director General Adjunto de Acuerdos Ambientales Multilaterales, UCAI-SEMARNAT. (UCAI/0896/2012)

Emb. Ernesto Céspedes Oropeza, Director General para Temas Globales, SRE.

Reg. DEAI_199



ROYAL NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Secretariat of the CBD
413 Saint-Jacques Street, Suite 800
Montreal, QC, H2Y 1N9
Canada

Your ref

Our ref
201102865-/SOL

Date
29 June 2012

Norwegian submission on IPBES/CBD, Notification 2012-067

Views from Norway on the process, under the CBD, on how requests from the Convention would be conveyed to IPBES

The COP is the decision making body of the CBD and must adopt a decision outlining the procedure and system for interaction between the CBD and IPBES. This should cover both how to convey the requests (this notification). Ideally it should also cover how to use the findings from IPBES, this would need to be completed at a later stage.

The critical elements when designing the structure is timing and predictability. We would also like to add the potential need for prioritization of knowledge needs

1) COP 11 makes a decision that authorizes SBSTTA to send requests to IPBES. If possible the requests should be prioritized and potentially be given in separate categories; eg. assessments, scoping related to new and emerging issues, others. CBD ES sends the SBSTTA's decision to the IPBES secretariat for consideration by the MEP. The COP can decide to send additional requests.

2) The decisions should be well prepared to provide predictability. The CBD ES could be requested by SBSTTA (in the outset, such a request could also be included in the COP 11 decision to save time) to invite Parties and observers to submit proposals on requests to IPBES. The ES shall then compile the proposals and draw up, in consultation with the IPBES Secretariat (to ensure that SBSTTA has all relevant information), a report with proposed SBSTTA decisions that address IPBES.

IPBES as an independent body will establish its own procedures for processing and prioritising requests submitted by Governments directly or indirectly through CBD and other Conventions and international processes. UNEP has asked for views on such procedures from



ROYAL NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Secretariat of the CBD
413 Saint-Jacques Street, Suite 800
Montreal, QC, H2Y 1N9
Canada

Your ref

Our ref
201102865-/SOL

Date
29 June 2012

Norwegian submission on IPBES/CBD, Notification 2012-067

Views from Norway on the process, under the CBD, on how requests from the Convention would be conveyed to IPBES

The COP is the decision making body of the CBD and must adopt a decision outlining the procedure and system for interaction between the CBD and IPBES. This should cover both how to convey the requests (this notification). Ideally it should also cover how to use the findings from IPBES, this would need to be completed at a later stage.

The critical elements when designing the structure is timing and predictability. We would also like to add the potential need for prioritization of knowledge needs

1) COP 11 makes a decision that authorizes SBSTTA to send requests to IPBES. If possible the requests should be prioritized and potentially be given in separate categories; eg. assessments, scoping related to new and emerging issues, others. CBD ES sends the SBSTTA's decision to the IPBES secretariat for consideration by the MEP. The COP can decide to send additional requests.

2) The decisions should be well prepared to provide predictability. The CBD ES could be requested by SBSTTA (in the outset, such a request could also be included in the COP 11 decision to save time) to invite Parties and observers to submit proposals on requests to IPBES. The ES shall then compile the proposals and draw up, in consultation with the IPBES Secretariat (to ensure that SBSTTA has all relevant information), a report with proposed SBSTTA decisions that address IPBES.

IPBES as an independent body will establish its own procedures for processing and prioritising requests submitted by Governments directly or indirectly through CBD and other Conventions and international processes. UNEP has asked for views on such procedures from

Postal address
PO Box 8013 Dep

Office address
Myntgt. 2

Telephone
+47 22 24 90 90

Department for Biodiversity,
Outdoor Recreation and Cultural
Heritage
Telefax
+47 22 24 95 60

Our officer
Tone Solhaug
+47 22 24 59 54

0030 Oslo

postmottak@md.dep.no
www.miljo.no

Vat no.
972 417 882

CBD Notification 2012-067: Invitation to provide views on the process, under the Convention on Biological Diversity, on how requests from the Convention would be conveyed to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

27 June 2012

Introduction

UNEP-WCMC, in collaboration with, and with funding from, the Ministry of Environment of Finland, has prepared a report *Promoting synergies within the cluster of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements*. The report had been made available to the various MEA secretariats and parties for review, and their comments were addressed in the final version. It was launched, with the participation of the CBD Secretariat, at the fourth meeting of the Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention in May 2012.

The science – policy interface is one of the subject areas of the report, for which opportunities for synergies were explored. Several of the findings and recommendations refer to the process for conveying requests from the biodiversity-related conventions to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). We would like to submit these findings and recommendations here (see below). The full report is available at http://www.unep-wcmc.org/medialibrary/2012/04/27/8b832e8c/Final_MEA_synergies_27April2012_cover.pdf, and a summary version at http://www.unep-wcmc.org/medialibrary/2012/04/27/ff1a00f0/MEA_synergies_summary_for_web_cover_27April2012.pdf. The cluster of biodiversity-related MEAs referred to here includes the six conventions that cooperate through the Biodiversity Liaison Group (CBD, CITES, CMS, International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, Ramsar Convention and World Heritage Convention).

Key findings on the science – policy interface from the report *Promoting synergies within the cluster of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements*.

1. Working together on IPBES through CSAB

For MEAs, including all biodiversity-related conventions, the need for improved scientific information to guide decision-making has been widely acknowledged. The challenges related to this issue have been highlighted by the Gap Analysis produced for the second *Ad Hoc* Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Meeting on an Intergovernmental Science – Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem

Services¹. The Gap Analysis highlights that most of the current science – policy interfaces work in a separate manner (finding 2.2) and this is particularly true for the scientific advisory bodies of the biodiversity-related conventions. These bodies have evolved with their corresponding conventions and thus, the fact that the working mechanisms of each of the biodiversity-related conventions are separate is no surprise. However, the biodiversity-related conventions have established a mechanism for cooperation in this regard, the **Chairs of the Scientific Advisory Bodies of Biodiversity-related Conventions** (CSAB). The CSAB meetings have identified issues of common concern at the science - policy interface as well as issues with the potential of rapid progress in improving the science – policy interface for the participating conventions. The list of these issues could be provided to IPBES as a joint input from the conventions.

The working arrangements for MEAs within IPBES are still to be established with the operationalisation of IPBES but it would be expected that IPBES addresses MEAs in a way consistent across MEAs, *e.g.* by sending information or requests to the MEAs as one partner. As contained in the *Busan Outcome Document*, the third intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder IPBES-meeting outlined key principles and functions of the new panel. The biodiversity-related MEAs are outlined as the key clients of the new panel. To this end, it would seem important that MEAs find a way to speak with one voice to and within IPBES, mandated by their Parties, assisted by CSAB and the secretariats (building on the joint statement delivered by the six global biodiversity-related conventions at the first plenary meeting of IPBES in October 2011). This would not exclude individual conventions to interact with IPBES on convention-specific issues.

2. *Parties driving the provision of scientific advice for conventions through IPBES*
So far, CBD, CITES, CMS and the Ramsar Convention have positioned themselves to the emerging IPBES, expressing their interest in participating in IPBES and their concerns about recognition of their role. IPBES provides a unique opportunity for the biodiversity-related conventions to receive independent and peer-reviewed scientific advice, which is coordinated across various fields of expertise in biodiversity and ecosystem services and is expected to be mandated by the countries that are Parties to the conventions. If, as it currently seems, IPBES will be **country-driven**, there is the chance that scientific advice to the conventions originating from IPBES has been agreed upon effectively by the convention Parties – a model that would mirror the operations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Parties could, through elaboration of scientific advice in the scientific advisory and other bodies of the conventions, ensure that this advice is coherent across conventions. The meetings of CSAB could play an important liaison role to the scientific advisory bodies of the conventions in terms of the process between IPBES and the conventions.

¹ Document UNEP/IPBES/2/INF/1

3. *Joint mandates for assessments*

Coordinated scientific advice as recognised by IPBES could materialise in a number of key areas, of which assessments and indicators are particularly relevant for the conventions². Several biodiversity-relevant **assessments** have been widely acknowledged by the conventions, namely the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) and more specific assessments in areas of particular relevance for the conventions. Such assessments are commissioned by the conventions themselves or have been established by other agencies or organisations, for example in the areas of agriculture (in particular through FAO) and marine ecosystems. Through IPBES, the conventions could provide a coordinated mandate for global and regional as well as thematic assessments that can then be used to provide coherent and coordinated scientific advice to the convention-related decision-making processes, including the convention bodies as well as processes at the regional and Party level. See the **figure** (below) for two options for the suggested interaction between the convention bodies, CSAB and IPBES. IPBES could also contribute to the biodiversity sections of future editions of the GEO and to the GBO.

4. *Joint approach to the Regular Process for the Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment*

The biodiversity-related conventions could also cooperate in taking a joint approach to the **Regular Process for the Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment**, which would be likely to strengthen the conventions' benefiting from this global process and would open further opportunities to provide biodiversity-related information to this process. This joint approach could happen through, or with the assistance of, IPBES.

5. *Cooperation through sub-global assessments*

It should be stressed that coherent and coordinated scientific advice, provided across the conventions through IPBES, would need to extend to the **regional and national level**. The above-mentioned Gap Analysis lamented the widespread lack of capacity for the science – policy interface at those levels, in particular in least developed countries and small island developing states. The **sub-global assessments** – originally initiated as part of the MA – provide a useful forum for the biodiversity-related conventions to cooperate, potentially assisted and facilitated by IPBES. Sub-global assessments are ecosystem assessments conducted at either a regional, national or local scale. An ecosystem assessment provides the connection between environmental issues and people by considering the ecosystems from which services are derived and the people who depend on and are affected by changes in supply of these services. Furthermore, the sub-global assessments are linked through the Sub-Global Assessment (SGA) Network, which provides a learning platform for sub-global

² The Gap Analysis (UNEP/IPBES/2/INF/1) names other key aspects, including research strategies, models and scenarios, knowledge-brokering and capacity-building (finding 5.1).

assessment practitioners to come together, share lessons learned and experiences and develop capacity by gaining new skills and knowledge.

6. *Alignment of indicator development*

The process of developing **indicators** has evolved separately between the conventions, with CBD and Ramsar being particularly advanced (and other MEAs outside of the biodiversity cluster as defined here, such as the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification UNCCD). With the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, an opportunity is provided to better align indicator development between conventions at the global, but also regional and national levels. Again, IPBES could provide a forum for mandating a coordinated and coherent approach to the development and/or refinement of indicators for biodiversity and ecosystem services that could build on the existing indicators and indicator processes of the conventions³. It is particularly helpful in this regard that some conventions have called for an alignment of their own indicator development processes with those of other conventions (*e.g.* through the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020) and that several of the biodiversity-related MEAs already cooperate on indicators through the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership, allowing for building on an existing mechanism instead of creating new ones. The CBD *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group on Indicators for the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, meeting in June 2011, adopted two key recommendations of relevance in this regard: Recommendation 11: *‘The CBD should explore opportunities to collaborate with other multi-lateral environmental agreements and relevant international organizations and agencies in working towards coherent and prioritized monitoring programmes for biodiversity’* and recommendation 12: *‘The proposed indicator framework for the Strategic Plan should be kept under review with a view to enabling the future incorporation of relevant indicators developed by other Conventions and processes that are relevant to monitoring biodiversity’*⁴.

7. *Cooperation in recognition of traditional knowledge*

Another area of particular relevance to the biodiversity-related conventions is **traditional knowledge** generated and maintained by indigenous peoples and local communities. Traditional knowledge is particularly recognised by the CBD in article 8j. Target 18 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 calls for respecting and fully integrating traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous local

³ The indicators of the different conventions overlap to some extent; see, for example, the mapping of the Ramsar indicators of effectiveness against the 2010 biodiversity indicators of the CBD in *The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and its Indicators of Effectiveness*, document UNEP/WCMC/Post-2010/0709/8d for the International Expert Workshop on the 2010 Biodiversity Indicators and Post-2010 Indicator Development, Reading, UK, July 2009, available at [Hhttp://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/ind/emind-02/official/emind-02-08d-en.pdf](http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/ind/emind-02/official/emind-02-08d-en.pdf)H, and Annex III of document UNEP/IPBES/3/INF/2: Current and future status of biodiversity and ecosystem service indicators.

⁴ Report of the *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group on Indicators for the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, UNEP/CBD/AHTEG-SP-Ind/1/3

communities in the implementation of the CBD. This opens an avenue for cooperation of the conventions in recognition and involvement of traditional knowledge and the holders of such knowledge in the joint science – policy interface enabled through the cooperation within IPBES. The 3rd *Ad Hoc* Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Meeting on an Intergovernmental Science – Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in June 2010 concluded that in carrying out its work the platform should ‘*recognise and respect the contribution of indigenous and local knowledge to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems*’ (UNEP/IPBES/3/3, Annex, paragraph 7d).

Figure: Two options for the suggested interaction between the convention bodies, CSAB and IPBES

