IUCN input paper to the IPBES-11 Plenary

Eleventh meeting of the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
Windhoek, Namibia, 9 – 16 December 2024

Main considerations

IUCN recognizes and congratulates the considerable efforts of all involved with IPBES over the biennium 2023–2024. IUCN's main considerations for the IPBES plenary are presented below, and expanded with more detailed comments in the following pages.

Input into Nexus Assessment SPM (Agenda item 7(a))

- √ Mention climate change in the assessment's title, given its inclusion as a fifth nexus element.
- √ Add "extinction risk" in KM-A1, Figure SPM.4, & Figure SPM.A2, given its inclusion as a core indicator of both the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals. Traceable accounts are {2.3.3, Figure 2.13}.
- √ Add the key elements regarding effective and equitable management of areas of particular importance for biodiversity into descriptions of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Target 3, in Background B2, C1, C2, & Appendix IV. Traceable account is {2.3.3}.
- √ Use "urbanisation, agriculture and aquaculture, extractive industries, transportation, disturbance, natural system modification", in KM-A2 & Background A1, instead of the unhelpfully generic term "land and sea use change", given the importance of sectoral specificity. Traceable accounts are {2.3.1.1, 2.5.2.1}.

Input into Transformative Change Assessment SPM (Agenda item 7(b))

- √ Add "extinction risk" in KM-A1, and Background A1 & A2, given the irreversible nature of species extinctions and thus the importance of transformative change in reducing extinction risk. Traceable accounts are {1.2.1, Figure 3.10}.
- √ Use "urbanisation, agriculture and aquaculture, extractive industries, transportation, disturbance, natural system modification", in KM-B1 & KM-B2, instead of the unhelpfully generic term "land and sea use change", given the importance of sectoral specificity, and consistent with Background B2.
- √ Specify Nature-based Solutions as "restoration interventions" in Background B3, given that, by definition, they are not "technological". The discussions of Nature-based Solutions in Background A11, B4, and B12, are appropriate and should be retained.

Input into Second Global Assessment Scoping (Agenda item 7(c))

- √ Use "urbanisation, agriculture and aquaculture, extractive industries, transportation, disturbance, natural system modification" in Paragraph 29, instead of the unhelpfully generic term "land and sea use change", given the importance of sectoral specificity.
- √ Add "extinction risk" in Paragraph 30, given its inclusion as a core indicator of both the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals.

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Background

IUCN has for 75 years served as a science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services, with its scientific excellence delivered by its independent expert Commissions, and its policy demand delivered from its Membership of States and government agencies and of national and international NGOs and indigenous peoples' organisations. The governance structure of the Union is neatly complementary with that of IPBES, as a wholly intergovernmental mechanism. Given the similarity of functions of the two institutions, IUCN's Members adopted Resolution 118 at the 2012 IUCN World Conservation Congress, mandating "A significant role for IUCN in IPBES". Since 2016, IUCN and IPBES have operationalized this collaboration through a strategic partnership including substantial in-kind support to stakeholder engagement (see Table 3.2 in IPBES/11/4, and IPBES/11/INF/20 Annex Paragraphs 2 & 35), including in facilitating the Open-Ended Network of IPBES Stakeholders (ONet) and providing in-kind and financial support to the organization of the Stakeholder Days preceding the IPBES plenary. IUCN is grateful to the Government of France for their continued support to IUCN's engagement with IPBES.

IUCN presents below its inputs for consideration of Member States at the 11th Plenary.

Item 5 of the provisional agenda - Progress in the implementation of the rolling work programme up to 2030 (IPBES/11/3)

IUCN provides a 0.5 FTE as in-kind support to implementation of the IPBES Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, Objective 5(c). In the documentation for previous IPBES plenaries, the Report of the Executive Secretary has acknowledged this support, but it is missing from IPBES/11/3. IUCN would welcome explicit recognition of the support provided by IPBES strategic partners in Reports of the Executive Secretary to future IPBES Plenaries.

Item 6 of the provisional agenda - Financial and budgetary arrangements for the Platform (IPBES/11/4)

IUCN welcomes the inclusion in Table 3.2 (page 10) of acknowledgement of its in-kind contributions to IPBES in 2023, of approximately $71,000 through provision of a 0.5 FTE and associated costs in support of implementation of the IPBES Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.

More generally, IUCN suggests inclusion of all seconded positions into the organizational chart for the IPBES secretariat (page 25), to ensure a full recognition of these important contributions.

Item 7(a) of the provisional agenda - Thematic assessment of the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food and health (IPBES/11/5)

Annex Preamble & Figure SPM.1. Suggest adding "climate change" to the assessment title, to correct the current misalignment of the title with respect to the inclusion of climate change as a fifth nexus element in the IPBES Nexus Assessment itself.

Annex KM-A1. Ecosystems are part of biodiversity (CBD definition), so change "Biodiversity and functioning ecosystems play…" to read simply "Biodiversity plays…".

Annex KM-A1. Given the inclusion of extinction risk as a core indicator of both the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as concerns about the

robustness of population indicators (Leung et al. 2020 Nature), it would be appropriate to add text to the end of the sentence Lines 40-42 to read “, while the Red List Index reveals that global species extinction risk has increased by around 4% per decade over the last 30 years {2.3.3, Figure 2.13}”.

Annex KM-A2. It would be useful to change “land- and sea-use change” to read “urbanisation, agriculture and aquaculture, extractive industries, transportation, disturbance, natural system modification”, given the importance of sectoral specificity. The traceable accounts for this are {2.3.1.1, 2.5.2.1}.

Annex KM-B1. Scenarios project outcomes rather than provide “results”. Moreover, these predictions are not necessarily negative, but rather are broadly sub-optimal (as clear from the subsequent text in this paragraph). Thus, suggest change “…result in negative outcomes for other nexus elements…” to read “…project sub-optimal outcomes for other nexus elements…”. The traceable account for this is {3.7.1}.

Annex Background Message A1. Change “land- and sea-use change” to read “urbanisation, agriculture and aquaculture, extractive industries, transportation, disturbance, natural system modification”, given the importance of sectoral specificity. The traceable accounts for this are {2.3.1.1, 2.5.2.1}.

Figure SPM.4. Given the inclusion of extinction risk as a core indicator of both the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as concerns about the robustness of intactness indicators (Martin et al. 2019 Nature Ecol Evol) and of population indicators (Leung et al. 2020 Nature), it would be appropriate to include a panel in the figure for the “Red List Index”. The traceable account for this is {2.3.3, Figure 2.13}.

Annex Background Message B2. IUCN supports the sentence on Lines 486-489. However, the subsequent sentence omits crucial elements of Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Target 3. Suggest therefore adding text (Line 490) to read “…target 3 to conserve and effectively and equitably manage areas of particular importance for biodiversity covering 30 per cent…”. The traceable account for this is {2.3.3}.

Annex Background Message C1. The text omits crucial elements of Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Target 3. Suggest therefore adding text (Line 591) to read “…Framework to conserve and effectively and equitably manage areas of particular importance for biodiversity covering 30 per cent of land, waters and seas by 2030.”. The traceable accounts for this are {2.3.3, 5.1.1.3}.

Annex Background Message C2. It would be useful to adjust language for consistency with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, so to change “When targeting areas of biodiversity concern…” to read “When targeting areas of particular importance for biodiversity…”. The traceable accounts for this are {2.3.3, 5.1.1.3}.

Figure SPM.A2. Given the inclusion of extinction risk as a core indicator of both the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals, it would be appropriate to add mention of it into the “Biodiversity” panel of Figure SPM.A2, to read “(ecosystem extent and integrity; extinction risk; species richness; community composition)”. The traceable account for this is {2.3.3, Figure 2.13}.

Appendix IV. The text for “B01 Area-based conservation” omits crucial elements of Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Target 3. Suggest adding text to read “Conservation strategies including, but not limited to, protected areas, and other effective conservation measures that use a nexus approach to conserve and effectively and equitably manage areas of particular importance for biodiversity across landscapes and seascapes.”. The traceable accounts for this are {2.3.3, 5.1.1.3}.

Item 7(b) of the provisional agenda - Thematic assessment of the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and the determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity (IPBES/11/6)

Annex KM-A1. Transformative change is also essential to prevent species extinctions – which are irreversible. Suggest therefore adding text to read "…to avoid triggering irreversible tipping points, species extinctions, and the decline and collapse of key ecosystem functions.". The traceable account for this is {1.2.1}.

Annex KM-A6. This is a particularly important key message; the inclusion of incremental changes with the potential for scaling is especially critical: "transformative change, including small-scale or incremental changes that address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and nature's decline and have the potential to scale.".

Annex KM-B1. It would be appropriate to use the term "place-based" (as in KM-B2 & KM-C2) rather than "area-based", here. The traceable account for this is {5.3.1}.

Annex KM-B1. Change "land/sea use change" to read "urbanisation, agriculture and aquaculture, extractive industries, transportation, disturbance, natural system modification", consistent with Background Paragraph B2, given the importance of sectoral specificity.

Annex KM-B2. Change "land/sea use change" to read "urbanisation, agriculture and aquaculture, extractive industries, transportation, disturbance, natural system modification", consistent with Background Paragraph B2, given the importance of sectoral specificity.

Background Message A1. Transformative change is also essential to prevent species extinctions – which are irreversible. Suggest therefore adding text to read "…to avoid triggering irreversible species extinctions and decline and collapse of key ecosystem functions.". The traceable account for this is {1.2.1}.

Background Message A2. Given the inclusion of extinction risk as a core indicator of both the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as concerns about the robustness of ecological footprint (Blomqvist et al. 2013 PLoS Biol), it would be appropriate to add text to the end of the sentence Lines 348-349 to read ", while species extinction risk has increased severely over recent decades {Figure 3.10}".

Background Message A6. It would be prudent to specify "…poorly-designed biodiversity offsets…" on Line 478.

Background Message A11. This is a particularly important paragraph; the inclusion of incremental changes with the potential for scaling is especially critical.

Background Message B1. For clarity and consistency with {5.3}, suggest adjusting text to read "…to conserve, restore and regenerate places of value to nature and people…".

Background Message B3. By definition, it is not appropriate to describe Nature-based Solutions as "technologies" (see the IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions), so suggest amending this text to read "…including digital technologies and restoration interventions through nature-based solutions…". The mentions of Nature-based Solutions elsewhere, notably in Background Paragraphs A11 (regarding local sustainability initiatives), B4 (regarding private investment), and B12 (regarding education), are appropriate.

Item 7(c) of the provisional agenda - Scoping report for a second global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services (IPBES/11/7)

Annex Paragraph 1. IUCN recommends amending the sentence in line 13 from: "…by providing the knowledge and the policy support tools needed for informed decision-making…" to read "…by providing knowledge and policy support needed for informed decision-making…". Provision of tools is beyond the mandate of IPBES.

Annex Paragraph 7. It would be important to specify the regionalisation to be used in defining regions for the second IPBES Global Assessment – presumably this will be the same as that used for the first IPBES Global Assessment.

Annex Paragraph 18. It is important that the classifications and typologies to be used by the second IPBES Global Assessment draw from authoritative typologies in existing use. An example would be the Global Ecosystem Typology (Keith et al. 2022 Nature), which the second Global Assessment authors could consider using as "units of analysis". It would therefore be useful to expand the text on line 121 here to read "…It will present the classifications and typologies, drawing from existing authoritative approaches where these exist, related to…".

Annex Paragraph 29. A common concern with the classification of drivers used in the first IPBES Global Assessment is the aggregation of different sectoral drivers under "land and sea use". It would therefore be much more useful to change "land and sea use" on line 194 here to read "urbanisation, agriculture and aquaculture, extractive industries, transportation, disturbance, natural system modification". This would have the additional benefit of bringing the IPBES classification of direct drivers into alignment with the long-standing, authoritative, and widely-used Conservation Measures Partnership classification (Salafsky et al. 2008 Conserv Biol).

Annex Paragraph 30. Extinction risk is adopted as a core indicator for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals; it was also harnessed at the highest level in the first IPBES Global Assessment (Figure SPM.3). Consistent with Paragraph 25, it would therefore be appropriate to add text on line 198 here to read "This subchapter will describe indicators that measure aspects related to nature, such as the number of species and their extinction risk, distribution and abundance".