

## Context of the development of a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (SES) for the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

The engagement of relevant stakeholders in IPBES is a founding principle of the platform established as an independent intergovernmental body (by a resolution adopted on 21 April 2012 in Panama City, Panama<sup>1</sup>) and following an intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder consultation process.

As a key functional principle, the Platform should “respond 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. **The Plenary also encourages and takes into account, as appropriate, inputs and suggestions made by relevant stakeholders, such as other intergovernmental organizations, international and regional scientific organizations, environment trust funds, non-governmental organizations, indigenous peoples and local communities and the private sector.**” (UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9 appendix I para 1; bold sections were not in the original – same for quotes below)

The principle above makes it clear that a great variety of stakeholders will need to be engaged in order for IPBES to deliver policy-relevant information. Building on this principle, stakeholder engagement is outlined in different parts of the texts describing IPBES and its Programme of Work.

Examples include:

a) Some of the operating principles<sup>2</sup> invite IPBES to engage stakeholders in its activities, including to “**Collaborate with existing initiatives on biodiversity and ecosystem services, including multilateral environment agreements, United Nations bodies and networks of scientists and knowledge holders, to fill gaps and build upon their work while avoiding duplication**”; “use clear, transparent and scientifically credible processes for the exchange, sharing and use of data, information and technologies **from all relevant sources, including non-peer-reviewed literature, as appropriate**” and “**Recognize and respect the contribution of indigenous and local knowledge to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems**”.

b) The Platform’s institutional arrangements outline the sharing of responsibilities with respect to stakeholder engagement, through, among other things:

- the Plenary being responsible for “ensuring the active and efficient participation of civil society in the Plenary”;
- the Bureau for “advising the Plenary on coordination between the Platform and other relevant institutions” and “identifying donors and developing partnership arrangements for the implementation of the Platform’s activities”; and
- the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel for “engaging the scientific community and other knowledge holders with the work programme, taking into account the need for different disciplines and types of knowledge, gender balance, and effective contribution and participation by experts from developing countries”.

IPBES Members have launched various activities to engage stakeholders in supporting the work undertaken by IPBES. For instance, the United Kingdom has set up a Stakeholder Hub to relay the calls for comments on IPBES documents and to provide regular information on IPBES. In France, the Foundation for Research on Biodiversity (FRB), with a mandate by the Ministries for Environment and Research, has been organising the contribution of stakeholders to the preparation of IPBES meetings since April 2011.

Networks of non-governmental stakeholders have also been active in communicating on IPBES-related activities and in engaging their respective constituencies in its work. Examples include several online surveys conducted under the auspices of ICSU and the United Nations University, an information forum set up by

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<sup>1</sup> The report of this meeting is the document UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9. All documents mentioned in this paper are available on [www.ipbes.net](http://www.ipbes.net)

<sup>2</sup> As per UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9 appendix I section II

IUCN, several awareness-raising events, targeted communication and expert workshops undertaken by the Stockholm Resilience Centre, UNESCO and the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity, the World Business Council on Sustainable Development, IUCN, and the Society for Conservation Biology, to name only a few.

A broad stakeholder participation during plenary meetings was critical for the success of the three multi-stakeholder and intergovernmental consultative meetings on IPBES held in 2008, 2009 and 2010, and for the two plenaries of IPBES held in 2011 and 2012. This participation was strengthened by three stakeholders days events convened by FAO, UNDP, UNEP and UNESCO, co-facilitated by ICSU and IUCN, and held prior to plenary meetings in 2011 (Nairobi), 2012 (Panama) and 2013 (Bonn).

Finally, several information documents, produced by the interim IPBES Secretariat or by stakeholders, have reported ways, means, and opportunities for stakeholders to engage in IPBES. This includes several suggested activities to be considered for the work programme<sup>3</sup>, a draft communication strategy<sup>4</sup> and a review of incentives to participate in the Platform's assessments<sup>5</sup>.

All the elements described above illustrate how different types of stakeholders have engaged in IPBES so far. It became clear in Bonn while discussing the Work Programme of IPBES, that a formal strategy was necessary in order to ensure effective contribution from and real use of IPBES products by the wide variety of IPBES stakeholders.

It is in this context that IPBES-1 decided to invite IUCN and ICSU to *“work with relevant stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and local communities and the private sector, and with the secretariat, to prepare in consultation with the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel a **draft stakeholder engagement strategy** for supporting the implementation of the work programme”*<sup>6</sup>.

Pierre Commenville<sup>7</sup> and Anne-Hélène Prieur-Richard<sup>8</sup>, 13 March 2013

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<sup>3</sup> IPBES/1/INF/14/Rev.1 Possible scenario for a work programme of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and its precursors UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/INF/3 and UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/2

<sup>4</sup> UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/INF/4 Draft communication strategy for the start-up of the intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services and for its initial work programme

<sup>5</sup> IPBES/1/INF/15 Preliminary review of the motivations for participating in Platform assessments

<sup>6</sup> As mentioned in Decision IPBES1/2 to be found in document IPBES/1/12.

<sup>7</sup> Secretariat of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (pierre.commenville@iucn.org)

<sup>8</sup> DIVERSITAS secretariat (anne-helene@diversitas-international.org)