



HOW TO BAKE A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR IPBES?

Following a mandate from the recently established Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), UNESCO in close cooperation with IHDP, DIVERSITAS, IUCN and UNEP and with the kind financial support of the Ministry of the Environment of Japan and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation assembled an informal group of experts, who worked to identify the ingredients of a possible conceptual framework for IPBES. This group of experts envisioned what it might look like, however did not bake the cake fully, waiting for a legitimate decision to be taken about preparation and adoption of a possible conceptual framework for IPBES.

These experts worked through a web-based content management system and met for a workshop from 27 to 29 October 2012 in Paris, France. This paper summarizes their suggestions and views which can be found in the information document IPBES/1/INF/9.

An informal expert group proposes views on ingredients and preparation steps

Summary of the outcome of an informal expert workshop on main issues relating to the development of a conceptual framework for IPBES (IPBES/1/INF/9)



WHAT ARE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS?



- In the context of biodiversity and ecosystem services, conceptual frameworks are simple representations of relationship between people and nature;
- Conceptual frameworks provide a shared language and a common set of relationships and definitions;
- For complex issues, conceptual frameworks help clarify and focus thinking.

HOW CAN CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS BE USEFUL TO IPBES?



- Conceptual frameworks can be critical for enabling communication between disciplines, thereby facilitating and strengthening multidisciplinary collaboration.
- Conceptual frameworks can be used to facilitate the inclusion of indigenous and local knowledge systems.
- Conceptual frameworks, if developed in an open and transparent process allowing the involvement of a broad set of stakeholders and knowledge holders, can help to promote consistency and complementarities between the four functions of IPBES.
- Conceptual frameworks can significantly increase policy relevance by addressing user needs, as well as improving adaptation and learning.

WHAT WOULD BE THE INGREDIENTS OF A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR IPBES?

- **Biodiversity and ecosystem functioning**
- **Ecosystem goods and services**
- **Human well-being**
- **Decisions and institutions**
- **Scales**



HOW DO WE GO ABOUT COMBINING THE INGREDIENTS?



CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS USED BY OTHER PROCESSES

- The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment
- The Southern African Sub Global Assessment
- An Andean Indigenous worldview
- The Japan Ecosystem Assessment
- The United Kingdom Ecosystem Assessment
- The conceptual framework for the Aichi Targets (2011-2020 Strategic Plan for Biodiversity)

SUPPLIES

The detailed description of the work undertaken by the informal expert group can be accessed in the information document IPBES/1/INF/9 "Outcome of an informal expert workshop on main issues relating to the development of a conceptual framework for IPBES". The authors of this documents are:

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1

A conceptual framework for IPBES might be developed through an open, deliberative and transparent process including scientific experts, indigenous and local knowledge experts, policymakers and other relevant stakeholders.



2

A conceptual framework for IPBES might include the key components of biodiversity, ecological functioning, ecosystem services and human well-being as a Socio-Economic-Ecological System with particular attention to their inter-relationship.



3

The inclusion of institutions and decisions and their role as key indirect and direct drivers of changes in the state of biodiversity, ecosystem functioning, ecosystem services and human well-being within a conceptual framework for IPBES might be considered in order to provide clear strategies for response interventions.



4

A conceptual framework for IPBES could include the explicit recognition of spatial and temporal scales to allow a deeper understanding of multi-scale and cross-scale impacts of changes to and changes of the various components within Socio-Economic-Ecological Systems.



5

A common conceptual framework for IPBES can help to ensure a coherent and consistent approach across the four functions of IPBES - knowledge generation, assessment, policy support and capacity building – and could clarify linkages and integration between them.



6

A conceptual framework for IPBES could clarify information on synergies and trade-offs across the various components of the Socio-Economic-Ecological Systems and provide guidance for responding to detrimental changes in biodiversity and ecosystem functioning both in the short run through adaptation and in the long run through transformational changes.



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