



World Business Council for  
Sustainable Development



***Business involvement in the Intergovernmental and multistakeholder science-policy  
Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)  
3<sup>rd</sup> Intergovernmental and Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on IPBES  
7 - 11 June 2010, Busan, Republic of Korea***

*The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) could become the international reference for independent, credible scientific advice for decision-making. At the third meeting on IPBES in the Republic of Korea in June 2010, Governments and other stakeholders will decide whether to establish this new science-policy platform and on its possible form and functions. Through this joint statement, WBCSD and IUCN demonstrate the potential role of business in the design and implementation of IPBES.*

**What is the relationship between business, biodiversity, and ecosystem services?**

All businesses depend and impact on biodiversity and ecosystem services, and face increasing risks linked to natural resources scarcity. Some businesses are highly dependent on healthy ecosystems and biodiversity for their productivity. For instance, it has been estimated that the degradation of fishing stocks results in an \$ 80-100 billion loss of income to the fisheries sector, putting at risk 27 million jobs (TEEB, 2008).

Concurrently, the need to respond to pressing environmental challenges stimulates the emergence of new markets and business models. Businesses are actors of change and dynamic in innovation for creating ecosystem-friendly markets and developing more sustainable technologies. Biodiversity conservation is a source of innovation for pioneering businesses in emerging markets for ecosystem services and biodiversity-related products. One example includes forest industries, which have partnered with environmental organizations and social groups to develop new models of doing business, and to make use of market forces to promote sustainable forest management.

**IPBES and Business; mutual benefits in the future**

The challenges to maintain, sustainably use, and restore, where needed, biodiversity and ecosystem services are complex, and require the contribution of all stakeholders to develop effective solutions. The need to engage business in IPBES is two-fold:

On the one hand, business will benefit from IPBES as it will set the reference for credible and relevant scientific knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services. Businesses are encouraged, and in many instances incentivised, to find sustainable solutions to avoid, minimize, and offset their impacts on ecosystems. Methods and tools emanating from IPBES could support decision-making on business environmental strategies and policies, the measurement of ecosystem impacts as well as accounting and reporting. Additionally, the provision of knowledge from IPBES could set the foundations for market-based mechanisms, like biodiversity offset frameworks. Using information from IPBES would give more credibility to mechanisms used by businesses and help improve their environmental standards, therefore increasing business competitiveness and innovation.

On the other hand, involving business in IPBES will bring an important value added and legitimacy to IPBES. Businesses are providers of information and can therefore contribute to generation and assessment of knowledge: good practices developed for sustainable use of biodiversity for instance are valuable sources of knowledge to be assessed by IPBES. Businesses are also decision-makers and have an important role to play in the conservation, use and management of biodiversity and ecosystem services upon which they depend. Business brings complementary perspectives to the ones from governments, which will help identify and prioritize the most relevant information gaps to be addressed by IPBES.

### **Messages for IPBES-3; towards a multistakeholder platform that recognises the role of business**

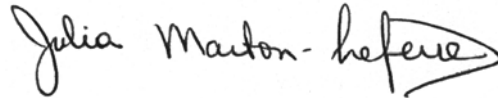
In order to ensure mutual benefits for both business and IPBES, WBSCD and IUCN support the establishment of an overarching and authoritative platform to provide independent policy-relevant scientific information:

- IPBES should be designed to be the authoritative source of credible policy-relevant knowledge on biodiversity, ecosystem services, and human well-being in order to facilitate access of relevant information to all decision makers.
- IPBES should particularly aim to:
  - Assess existing knowledge, identify gaps and encourage further research in areas where it is needed;
  - Deliver methods and tools that are relevant and readily usable for decision makers and practitioners, including in the private sector.
- IPBES needs to be a multistakeholder platform to ensure its credibility, legitimacy and transparency. It needs to respond to the needs of the wide range of decision-makers and practitioners contributing to biodiversity, ecosystem services, and human well-being, including in the business sector.
- Business wants to engage and participate in IPBES. The 3rd Intergovernmental and Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on IPBES will need to further define the role of business in the governance and functions of IPBES.

We wish the meeting success in its deliberations, and look forward to an outcome that takes into account the needs of business as custodians and users of biodiversity and ecosystem services, and that recognises the role that business can play in the success of a new mechanism.



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