

Comments-Other

Document IPBES Work Programme Elements - DRAFT
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Page(s)	Line(s)	Comments
0	0	<p>Overall the document identifies a set of activities relevant for the work programme and serves well as a starting point for the plenary discussions. Phrased as “actions” it is however, difficult to separate the content of the work programme from the organization of IPBES. A critical point which is missing in this respect is at what stage the peer-review process of assessments and reports will take place. This is a prerequisite for the credibility of IPBES and needs to be integrated in the work programme.</p>
		<p>The work programme should be more explicit in pointing to the “overlapping processes” such as IPCC and CBD and, although recognizing the independence of IPBES, to seek synergies with these. A major challenge for biodiversity is the anticipated land-use changes connected to both climate mitigation and adaptation and here the overlap with parallel process within IPCC must be considered. Within the CBD the newly established 2020-tragets and their associated indicators is another obvious overlap. Again, IPBES can support the scientific basis for the both the development of relevant indicators and identifying policy-relevant tools for meeting and addressing the drivers of biodiversity loss. For instance assessments may chose to address drivers like land-use intensification, forestry, urbanization, fisheries etc rather than broad overview of status and trends in biodiversity.</p>
0	0	<p>Assessments should further also address outcomes of specific management approaches. This could include assessment of species reintroduction programmes, different types protected areas governance, restoration methods as well as policy instruments such as payment for ecosystem services. In general, a broader set of assessment themes needs to be considered.</p>

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2	41+	Paragraph 3. Note that there is a potential conflict between the scientific integrity and the needed strict review process of IPBES with a wide collaboration with other initiatives on biodiversity and ecosystem services. Just because the CBD-SBSTTA might have reviewed an issue or the existence of an AHTEG report on a topic does not guarantee the level of quality and scientific evidence that IPBES would like to represent. Thus, there might well be instances where important topics, already considered by other processes, still need to be addressed by IPBES.
4	20+	Paragraph 11-12. Echoing the comment on paragraph 3 – While seeking relevant synergies and cooperation with other processes, IPBES needs to maintain its own independence. When established procedures for assessments and reports are set, these should be considered when entering into collaboration with other initiatives
4	41+	Paragraph 13. Emerging from the last SBSTTA 15, one topic that appears well defined and in an urgent need of an in-depth assessment report is the topic of ecosystem restoration, This appears to be one good example of a topic that IPBES could take on early and by providing input in a relatively short time perspective, prove its value as a global support system
5	13-19	Paragraph 16(a). It should be made a point that the scientific community at large and its organizations is not “just” a stakeholder, but a central resource for IPBES. The emerging structure of IPBES should promote a sense of common ownership with the scientific community.
5	27-34	Paragraph 18. The only place in the current document where the review process is explicitly mentioned is here. This is insufficient and the inclusion of a strict and independent peer review process needs to be emphasized as an important part of the work programme. The intervention from the stakeholder groups at the first plenary session requested a specific subsidiary body for the review process. This is one concrete option that should be considered by the plenary.
5	33-34	Paragraph 18 (c). The need for technical support units, similar to the system within IPCC, for the different working groups (WG) is clear. This will make the WGs more efficient and should be seen as an internal capacity building activity.

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8	10-13	Activity 1. Harmonization of assessment methods has both values and risks associated. The key word here is “flexibility”. It is likely that the topic addressed in any given assessment will dictate how any conceptual framework should look like. Therefore it is unlikely that IPBES can establish one single assessment framework for all types of assessments.
8	15-17	Activity 2. This is a critical and needed activity! As biodiversity and ecosystem services have a multitude of aspects the involvement of different scientific disciplines and epistemologies an extended set of science needs to be included. Although central to the challenges of IPBES, traditional natural sciences needs to be complemented with a range of other disciplines to efficiently address the topics relevant to biodiversity and ecosystem services.
8	18-23	Paragraph 27. Traditional knowledge has so far largely failed to become integrated into decision support systems. IPBES opens an opportunity to develop new methods and procedures to better tap into this knowledge. This requires however, also a system of “peer review” to separate out relevant and accurate information from misleading “common knowledge”. If IPBES manage to set up such processes it will have made a significant contribution to secure valuable information that otherwise will be lost.
8	24-30	Paragraph 28. This is probably sufficient as a starting point. By building on existing methods from the extensive experience of previous assessments, IPBES should be able to set up its own guidelines.
8	40+	Paragraph 30. One additional point should be added relating to the need to establish a strict and independent peer review process.
9	8-14	Activities 3-4. The value of these kinds of meta-activities is unclear. It is probably more efficient if the responsible WG for a particular assessment navigates this as a part of their own specific work. By separating this from specific assessments risk wasting resources by duplicating activities. However, there is a clear need for any assessment to describe its relevance and relation to other existing and ongoing assessments; to identify lacking components and become a unique contribution.
9	33-35	Activity 5. For better clarity there is a need to define the difference between regional and sub-regional.

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9	37-45	Activity 6. It is unlikely that a generally best procedure on how to perform assessments on global, regional and sub-regional scale exists. It is likely that the best approach is closely connected to the topic addressed. In addition, the best approach in the first round of assessments might differ from later assessments. It is critical that IPBES is able to be efficient and at an early stage deliver assessments to prove it value as a policy support process.
10	22-31	Activity 9. Horizon scanning is an important role for science in the context of IPBES. In order to identify emerging issues at an early stage, input from science should be supported, encouraged and welcomed.
11	2-5	Activity 10. Is it really necessary to make this a separate activity? This should be a central part of the assessment itself and done by the WG in question.
11	25-30	Paragraph 41. Given that CBD has already identified a large set of indicators and metrics, it appears more efficient that IPBES builds on these rather than develop a separate set. It should be noted however, that it is notoriously difficult to establish global indicators that are relevant for policy making at the sub-regional and national scale. Much work remains with the indicators for the so called Aichi targets, and potentially IPBES has a role in making these operational.
11	33-35	Activity 12. It will be important for IPBES to make available all primary information for any assessment. Some kind of clearing house mechanism must be established and this infrastructure must be developed. This is closely associated with the need to establish some kind of technical support unit for assessments.
12	1+	Section 3.2. Relative to the detailed and well supported activities for assessments, the basis for how the knowledge generating function of IPBES appears less clear. Identification of knowledge gaps are largely seen as a side-effect of the assessments. Although these may indeed be important for identifying gaps it appears to be a rather defensive approach and lack proactive activities.
12	16-18	Activity 13. Although a “policy wish list” emerging from a prioritization process within the plenary is one approach to identifying important knowledge gaps it is by no means sufficient. There is a need for an independent scientific scoping process that supports the prioritization of the plenary.

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13	2-9	Activites 14-15. This seems to call for establishment of a communication and dissemination strategy and should perhaps be explicit in this respect.
13	10-35	Paragraph 48. How to engage the research community in specific topics and to promote science that answers specific questions will be challenging. This will require more than anything else that IPBES is seen as a strong and credible process with high degree of buy-in from the scientific community. It is unlikely that IPBES, as it is not going to perform any primary research, can “order” the scientific community to explore certain research areas. Of the points listed in the paragraph some appear more relevant for an efficient dialogue. This includes points (c), (d), (e), and (i). The other points might appear important but will be difficult for IPBES to achieve.
13	37-44	Activity 16. Long-term observations and monitoring is central for analyzing trends and states of key biodiversity and ecosystem variables. As such the existing monitoring and observation systems are important sources of information to the work of IPBES. However, entering into “partnership” with a multitude of actors and activities suggest that IPBES would be directly involved in generating new data which is not what has been intended.
14	18-19	Activity 17. This appears to be better placed and considered as a part of the policy tools rather than identification of knowledge gaps.
15	1+	Section 3.3. Policy tools - IPBES should inform or provide scientific meaning for key standards or duties that already exist in enforceable treaties and other law that no court or agency could doubt what they mean as a minimum standard of behavior, so that when an aggrieved small country or community within a country complains of harm due to a failure to enforce that standard there will be no façade of ignorance behind which the negligent polluters or over-harvesters can hide, and
15	1+	Section 3.3. Policy Tools - IPBES should demonstrate gaps in the law that allow key biological threats to go uncontrolled and ways to address those in amendments and in practice. These are provided for in a general way by Article 8(I) in the CBD like the general duty to regulate each GHG in the UNFCCC but IPBES can provide more specific advice.

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17	14-19	Paragraph 63. It is critical to note that IPBES needs to build internal capacity to allow a broad geographical representation. It is likely that experts from developing countries need specific support both for participation in meetings but also in terms of access to literature, data and methodology. In a longer perspective this also means that IPBES helps to build regional and national capacity through its own activities.
17	36-38	Paragraph 65 (d). It would be most valuable if IPBES could contribute to a freer, better and more transparent system of access to the primary scientific literature. The current trend is that large publishers see the publication of scientific journals as a profitable business. This may threaten the availability not only to scientists but even more so for the policy making sector.
18	2-7	Activities 23-24. Of these two, the second (24) appears more efficient. We already know that capacity needs are enormous and it is probably much more efficient to tap into the already available knowledge. It should also be noted that the assessment and knowledge generation functions will themselves have the potential to identify capacity needs. This should be one key component of the different WGs to identify capacity building needs within their specific work.
18	22-29	Paragraph 68. The paragraph highlights several important points. It should be stressed that points a-c are not only an issue for developing countries but also in many cases within developed countries. These are generic problems in a science – policy interface, all needing to be strengthened
19	19-26	Activities 28-29. Making data, information and knowledge available is a key to capacity building. The intention in activity 28 should be supported. It is however, unclear what activity 29 actual aims to do. As currently expressed it is too vague to see what the value of a “knowledge platform” would be.
20	7-10	Activity 30. A well motivated activity, but seems to belong to section 3.1 on assessments.
20	37+	Paragraph 78. It might be considered to add the need of open access to relevant literature and data in this context.