



DANISH PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION 2012



## EPBRS

### The thematic content of the first IPBES work programme

University of Copenhagen, 16.-18. January 2012

### Chair's Summary

Full meeting report available at <http://www.epbrs.org/news/show/24>

**Venue:** University of Copenhagen, Bispetorvet 1-3. 1167 Copenhagen K., Denmark

**Hosted by:** Danish Ministry of Environment  
University of Copenhagen

**Organisers:** Martin Schneekloth (Ministry of Environment)  
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# Chair's Summary

## General comments in relation to assessments and the IPBES work programme

The EPBRS workshop participants recommend that all four functions of IPBES should be integrated in relevant aspects of the first work programme.

Assessments of knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services should in general be designed in such a way that they can also help to identify and prioritize key scientific information needed for policymakers at appropriate scales, catalyze efforts to generate new knowledge, support policy formulation and implementation and prioritize key capacity-building needs to improve the science policy interface.

Assessments will in many cases probably depend on an approach that integrates information from a variety of disciplines relevant to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including evidence-based knowledge disciplines, as well as local or traditional knowledge.

Assessments should wherever possible be designed in such a way as to make up-scaling and down-scaling possible. Assessments should also be carefully selected and designed in order to avoid overlaps and duplication of work.

Participants at the workshop emphasized that Europe with its broad landscape of knowledge holders on biodiversity and ecosystem services is particularly ready to contribute actively to the first work programme with experience, resources and assessments.

## Current situation in relation to assessments and the work programme

1. While there are many known gaps, there are already significant existing data, information and knowledge that can provide the basis for assessment(s) on a wide range of critical issues.
2. There is experience from other assessment processes of what has worked well and what has not worked well, which can be used to inform development and implementation of IPBES work programme.
3. There are already more suggestions for assessments at multiple scales that IPBES could carry out than it would be reasonable to consider even in the medium term, so prioritised choices will need to be made.
4. As IPBES governance structure and implementation processes have yet to be agreed, and there is no agreed work programme or budget, timescale and modalities for assessments are not clear.
5. Working on the basis that we want IPBES to be up and running as soon as possible, we need to identify those steps that can be taken in 2012 to help IPBES move towards implementation of its work programme.

## Issues relating to the work programme

6. IPBES could aim to do (periodic) global and regional assessments, drawing on sub-global assessments, designed in collaboration with scientists and other stakeholders, and based on a common conceptual framework. Duplication of effort with existing initiatives should be avoided.
7. IPBES may also carry out thematic assessments focused on specific questions and issues, and potentially develop products targeted at specific audiences.

8. Assessments and associated tools could identify risks and consequences of different options for policy and action (including maintaining the status quo) and present these in a non-policy prescriptive manner, thus also supporting the policy support function of IPBES.
9. Details of the initial scoping process as the first step in assessment processes need to be defined and operationalised in 2012, based on decisions made at the second session of the IPBES plenary meeting in Panama City in April 2012. Otherwise it can prove difficult for IPBES to be able to address major relevant negotiation processes, as appropriate, in a timely manner later in the decade.
10. Thematic assessments might include those already discussed in IPBES meetings, issues raised by other MEAs/processes, and other issues raised at this meeting (included as footnote).<sup>1</sup>
11. Expert meeting(s) could be convened to review potential issues that Governments and other participants suggest to the IPBES Plenary as priorities for assessments, in order to help prioritize the issues being discussed.
12. Intersessional processes and work related to the work programme between the IPBES meeting in Panama in April 2012 and the following IPBES plenary meeting should be activity-focused..
13. Potential relationships with other assessment processes (TEEB, GRAME and others) and possible consequences of this for the IPBES work programme should be explored, as IPBES becomes more clearly defined and as the other processes continue to evolve.

#### **Issues relating to processes for establishing assessments**

14. A careful definition and timescale for the initial scoping process for assessments is vital, in particular recognising required interaction with plenary or subsidiary bodies in clarifying and agreeing expected outputs and elements in the work programme. The Rules of Procedure should explain how such an initial scoping process should be carried out.
15. The process for identifying lead authors is critical, including guidance for Governments making nominations, whether other stakeholders can also nominate, how lead authors are chosen from the nominations, how the lead authors choose author teams, and what to do if there are gaps. These processes should be included in the rules of procedure for the operations of IPBES. It was mentioned by participants that this process is long and that it would be useful to have the process started already by decisions at the 2. IPBES meeting in Panama in April 2012.
16. Mechanisms need to be put in place in order to help ensure that the relevant experts and stakeholders (governments across sectors, natural and social scientists, business and local communities) are encouraged to participate from the beginning of each activity implemented by IPBES.

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<sup>1</sup> These might include: Aichi targets (individually and/or as a body); carbon ecosystem services assessment; pollination; ecosystem based adaptation for climate change; REDD+, coral reef health; ecosystem-based water supply; fish stocks; land use changes; land degradation issues; emerging diseases; resource-related conflict; forest communities – dependence and benefits; invasive alien species; scenarios for changes in human behaviour and outcomes on biodiversity and ecosystem services. Especially assessments in relation to the Aichi targets were highlighted, even though it was mentioned that overlapping with other assessments on the same issue should be avoided and that the request to do assessments on the Aichi targets should probably come via a decision of a CBD CoP, and not IPBES itself.

### **Issues relating to engagement of scientists and other knowledge holders in the assessment work**

17. It is important to incorporate capacity building initiatives in the assessments as early as possible in the scoping phase. This could be done through, for example, via scholarships for young scientists, exchange programmes, or requirements for gender balance.
18. A thorough review of the potential incentives and disincentives for scientists and other knowledge holders to engage in different regions could be conducted, and actions that could be taken to improve engagement identified.
19. The meeting proposes the use of mechanisms to facilitate participation of those involved in assessments, through for example funding, academic credits, or replacement capacity from PhD or post doc grants.
20. Procedures for establishing partnerships that help to ensure access to and strengthening networks providing data, information and knowledge relevant to carrying out assessments and following up on assessment outcomes should be established early on. The procedures should take the potentially mutually support values of partnerships into account, as well as the potential for reputational risks.
21. Procedures for inclusion of traditional knowledge in assessments should be developed, taking into account best practices for quality assurance of such information. These procedures should draw from earlier experiences made for example in the MA, IPCC and IAASTD. It should be noted that the MA developed specific procedures which dealt with traditional knowledge.
22. Areas where improvements to assessment tools are urgently needed could be identified, such as development and use of scenarios in the context of IPBES, and the measurement of ecosystem services other than provisioning services as measurement of ecosystem services has focused on these so far.
23. Structured ways to input IPBES needs into national and regional research strategies and funding plans should be identified, especially for work on the gaps in science identified for assessment processes.
24. Scientists and others selected to participate in assessments should participate in their personal capacity and not as representatives of certain organisations or institutions. Efforts should also be made to ensure that these people can participate in their own language.

### **Issues relating to communication and outreach**

25. Effective communication is absolutely critical in reaching the target audiences, including policy makers and the general public, and this includes ensuring effective targeting and packaging of products.<sup>2</sup>
26. IPBES products should combine evidence from science and other knowledge holders and ideally address, and if possible combine, elements of moral, ethical and economic considerations, as appropriate, to specific target audiences.

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<sup>2</sup> This might include: key message summaries; big storylines; appropriate metaphors; case studies; clear language; short messages; good maps and/or graphics; country and sector-relevant examples