



**Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy
Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services****Fourth session**

Kuala Lumpur, 22–28 February 2016

Item 8 of the provisional agenda*

**Communications, stakeholder engagement and strategic
partnerships****Communications, stakeholder engagement and strategic
partnerships (deliverable 4 (d))****Note by the secretariat****Introduction**

1. In decision IPBES-3/4 on communications, stakeholder engagement and strategic partnership, the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services invited the secretariats of the multilateral environmental agreements related to biodiversity and ecosystem services, as appropriate, to work with the Bureau to develop strategic partnerships, modelled on the existing strategic partnership arrangement with the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, setting out areas for collaboration and cooperation, to be approved by the Plenary at a future session.
2. In the same decision, the Plenary decided to review steps that had been taken to develop and enter into strategic partnerships and other collaborative arrangements at its fourth session.
3. Furthermore, in annex II to the same decision, the Platform encouraged the self-organization of an inclusive, open-ended network of stakeholders and indicated that a strategic partnership between the Platform and the network would specify the arrangements for collaboration and would be subject to the approval of the Plenary.
4. The stakeholders have self-organized and established an open-ended network. However, the Platform secretariat is able to enter into an agreement only with a legal entity. Several options could therefore be envisaged by the network, such as establishing an agreement with one or several organizations and concluding contractual arrangements on behalf of all other members of the network, or establishing the network as an organization.
5. Additional information on the work performed by the secretariat on implementation of deliverable 4 (d) on communication and stakeholder engagement strategies is set out in document IPBES/4/INF/15.
6. The Plenary may wish to take the following action:
 - (a) Consider, with a view to approving, the draft memorandum of cooperation between the multilateral environmental agreements related to biodiversity and ecosystem services (see annex I to the present note), and request the Executive Secretary to finalize the necessary institutional arrangements.

* IPBES/4/1.

(b) Review the steps taken to establish strategic partnerships (see annex II to the present note), and provide additional guidance.

(c) Take note of the progress made by the stakeholders of the Platform since the third session of the Plenary to self-organize and structure an open-ended network of stakeholders (IPBES/4/INF/16); request the Executive Secretary to collaborate with the open-ended network of stakeholders, under the supervision of the Bureau, to undertake the activities set out in the initial implementation plan of the stakeholder engagement strategy (decision IPBES-3/4); approve a strategic partnership between the open-ended network of stakeholders and the Platform based on the elements for the draft memorandum of cooperation, set out in annex III to the present note, and additional information made available at the Plenary on the nature of the organization representing the open-ended network; and request the Executive Secretary to finalize the institutional arrangements to establish the strategic partnership.

Annex I

Draft memorandum of cooperation between the multilateral environmental agreements related to biodiversity and ecosystem services

- DRAFT -

Memorandum of cooperation

between

Members of the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions

and

Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

The members of the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions (hereinafter referred to as the “members of the Liaison Group”) and the secretariat of the Intergovernmental Science Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (hereinafter referred to as the “secretariat of the Platform”), collectively referred to hereinafter as “the parties”,

Recalling that:

The members of the Liaison Group include the secretariats of the following international conventions focused on biodiversity issues: the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (2004), the Convention on Biological Diversity (1993), the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1982), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1975), the World Heritage Convention (1972), the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (1971) and the International Plant Protection Convention (1952).

The mandate for establishing the Liaison Group was first set out by the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in decision VII/26. Each member of the Liaison Group has the necessary mandate to participate in the Liaison Group within the relevant governing framework of their respective convention or agreement.

The Liaison Group aims to enhance cooperation between the Convention on Biological Diversity and relevant international conventions, organizations and bodies, and to strengthen and build on existing cooperative arrangements to enhance synergies and reduce inefficiencies in a manner consistent with their respective mandates, governance arrangements and agreed programmes within existing resources.

Each of the biodiversity-related conventions works to implement actions at the national, regional and international levels in order to reach shared goals of conservation and sustainable use. In meeting their objectives, the conventions have developed a number of complementary approaches (site, species, genetic resources and ecosystem-based) and operational tools (e.g., programmes of work, trade permits and certificates, multilateral systems for access and benefit-sharing, regional agreements, site listings and funds).

Many members of the Liaison Group have aligned their strategic planning and work to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020, including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, as adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (decision X/2), which provides an overarching framework on biodiversity for the entire United Nations system and all other partners engaged in biodiversity management and policy development.

The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services aims to strengthen the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long-term human well-being and sustainable development. Its functions are as follows:

- (a) To identify and prioritize key scientific information needed by policymakers on appropriate scales and to catalyse efforts to generate new knowledge;
- (b) To perform regular and timely assessments of knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services and their interlinkages;

(c) To support policy formulation and implementation by identifying policy-relevant tools and methodologies to enable decision makers to gain access to those tools and methodologies and, where necessary, to promote and catalyse their further development;

(d) To prioritize key capacity-building needs to improve the science-policy interface at appropriate levels.

Recalling also that the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Platform:

Invited, in its decision IPBES-3/4, the secretariats of the multilateral environmental agreements related to biodiversity and ecosystem services to work with the Bureau of the Platform to develop strategic partnerships, modelled on the existing strategic partnership arrangement with the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, setting out areas for collaboration and cooperation, to be approved by the Plenary at a future session;

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1. Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum of cooperation is to promote cooperation between the Platform and the parties in relevant aspects of the activities conducted in the framework of the Liaison Group with a view to supporting implementation of their respective mandates through promoting synergy and enhanced cooperation, avoiding overlaps and unnecessary duplication and ensuring improved effectiveness.

Article 2. Cooperation

The members of the Liaison Group and the secretariat of the Platform will, in particular, undertake the following actions:

(a) Promote cooperation through regular exchange of information on relevant activities; participation of concerned respective officers in relevant meetings, as required; consultation in the preparation of official documents by making drafts of relevant documents available; and providing comments on drafts, where appropriate and feasible;

(b) Encourage cooperation and information exchange between the respective focal points of the contracting parties of the members of the Liaison Group and of the Platform with a view to promoting cooperation at national and international levels;

(c) Facilitate and encourage mutual technical support, *inter alia*, to promote technical and scientific cooperation and capacity-building at the national and regional levels;

(d) Facilitate, where appropriate, the participation of technical experts on issues covered by members of the Liaison Group and of the secretariat of the Platform in relevant aspects of the programmes of work of its contracting parties;

(e) Facilitate synergy between the activities of the governing bodies of the members of the Liaison Group and those of the Platform in relevant matters.

Article 3. Work plans

With a view to implementing the present memorandum of cooperation, the members of the Liaison Group and the secretariat of the Platform may agree on work plans concerning joint activities between the secretariat of the Platform and several or all members of the Liaison Group. Such work plans, when concluded, will constitute an integral part of the present memorandum of cooperation.

Article 4. Financial aspects

Implementation of activities under this memorandum of cooperation is subject to availability of funding for that purpose.

Article 5. Reporting and further guidance

The members of the Liaison Group and the secretariat of the Platform will report to the respective governing and subsidiary bodies on the progress made in the implementation of the memorandum of cooperation and seek further guidance regarding new areas of cooperation.

Article 6. Review, amendment and termination

(a) This memorandum of cooperation does not impose, nor does it intend to impose, any legally binding commitments and it may be reviewed to assess its effectiveness and amended at any time by mutual agreement of the parties.

(b) This memorandum of cooperation will enter into force upon signature by a simple majority of members of the Liaison Group and by the secretariat of the Platform, and will remain in force for five years.

(c) The memorandum of cooperation may be terminated if all members of the Liaison Group agree by consensus to withdraw from the memorandum of cooperation, or by withdrawal of the secretariat of the Platform.

(d) A member of the Liaison Group may also withdraw its signature from the memorandum of cooperation by giving notice in writing to the parties not less than six months in advance of the effective date of termination. In such circumstances the memorandum of cooperation will remain in effect with the remaining parties.

Annex II

Steps taken to establish strategic partnerships

Following the approval of the guidance on the development of strategic partners set out in annex III to decision IPBES-3/4, the secretariat, as advised by the Bureau and in collaboration with the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, has taken the following steps:

Ongoing work

A memorandum of understanding has been drafted, but not yet signed, with the following organizations:

- Future Earth:

The purpose of the collaboration is to support the implementation of the Platform work programme by strengthening the participation of scientists in the Platform and by guiding some of the future scientific activities of Future Earth to ensure that they address gaps in knowledge that have been identified by the Platform. Collaboration includes, in particular, technical support to the dialogue workshop with research funding agencies and the scientific community to catalyse the generation of new knowledge (deliverable 1 (d)).

- International Union for Conservation of Nature:

The purpose of the collaboration is to support the implementation of the communication, outreach and stakeholder engagement activities of the Platform (deliverable 4 (d)) in the form of a contribution from the International Union for Conservation of Nature to the Platform of a half-time professional position in support of the activities of the initial implementation plan of the stakeholder engagement strategy.

- Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research:

The purpose of the collaboration is to strengthen the participation of scientists, research organizations and member countries of the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research in the Platform, and to guide the science programmes of the Institute towards addressing some of the future needs of the Platform.

Next steps

A number of potential partners have been proposed by task forces and other expert groups in the context of their work. The Bureau, as advised by the Panel, is working on establishing a list of potential strategic partners for consideration at their next meetings.

Annex III

Draft elements for a memorandum of cooperation between the Platform and the open-ended network of stakeholders

Partners

The memorandum of cooperation will be signed between the secretariat of the Platform and [name of organization(s)]¹ on behalf of the open-ended network of stakeholders.

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum of cooperation is to define the modalities of cooperation between the Platform secretariat and its open-ended network of stakeholders in order to support the implementation of the work programme for the period 2014–2018 as a whole, and the stakeholder engagement strategy (deliverable 4 (d)) in particular.

Main areas of cooperation

The open-ended network will provide support to the secretariat for the activities defined in the implementation plan of the stakeholder engagement strategy.

Roles and responsibilities

The open-ended network will develop an annual work plan defining the activities of the network in collaboration with the secretariat. This work plan will revolve around the activities listed in the initial implementation plan of the stakeholder engagement strategy (appendix to annex II to decision IPBES-3/4, paras. 8–15).

The open-ended network will submit annual reports of its activities to the Platform Plenary and evaluate its effectiveness based on indicators agreed together with the secretariat, as advised by the Bureau.

Both partners will regularly interact on matters of common interest, in accordance with an agenda agreed in advance, for the purpose of developing and monitoring collaboration. Such meetings will be virtual and take place at least every six months to achieve the following:

- Discuss technical and operational issues related to furthering the objectives of the partnership;
- Review progress by the network under the partnership (annual reports).

Within the context of the cooperation defined above, further bilateral meetings may be organized as and when deemed necessary by the Platform and by the network to address matters of common interest for the implementation of activities in specific areas, sectors, countries and regions.

The network will invite or inform the secretariat of the Platform, as appropriate, when it organizes meetings or events at which matters related to the partnership may be discussed.

The network will also seek to collaborate with other organizations or networks as appropriate.

Review, amendment and termination

The areas of cooperation will be reviewed annually to allow the partnership to adjust its work and respond to potential new demands.

Additional areas of cooperation on issues of common interest may be added as the partnership evolves.

¹ Additional information on the identity of the organization(s) entering into the partnership on behalf of the open-ended network will be provided at the Plenary.