

Distr.  
GENERAL

UNEP/EA.1/3/Add.1  
DATE

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

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**First session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of  
the United Nations Environment Programme**

Nairobi, 23-27 June 2014

Item 6 of the provisional agenda\*

**Report on the implementation of decisions adopted by past  
sessions of the governing body: Implementation of decision 27/4  
on the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and  
Ecosystem Services**

**Report of the Executive Director**

**Summary**

The 27<sup>th</sup> session of the UNEP Governing Council, held in Nairobi in February 2013 adopted decision 27/4 on the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. As requested by decision 27/4, this present document provides a report on the status of implementation of that decision.

The present document provides an overview of the implementation of UNEP Governing Council decision 27/4 and a summary of the key decisions resulting from the second session of the Plenary of the Platform, held from 9 to 14 December 2014, in Antalya, Turkey.

Since establishment of the Platform in April 2012, and intersessional process leading to the first session of the Platform's plenary in January 2013, UNEP supported putting in place the procedures to assist Governments and stakeholders to implement the Platform's work, and the development of the Platform's work programme.

The second session of the Platform's Plenary, held in December 2013 adopted an ambitious work programme for the Platform for the next five years, and strong commitment was demonstrated to its implementation through pledges of more than half of the total five year budget required (with over \$24million received and pledged).

The operationalization of IPBES has provided an opportunity for innovation in the science-policy interface on biodiversity and ecosystem services, through the recognition of the use of indigenous and local knowledge, the strong emphasis on capacity building in its work programme, and ensuring that the best available information related to decision-makers needs for biodiversity and ecosystem services is made available.

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\* UNEP/EA.1/1.

# **Report on the implementation of decisions adopted by past sessions of the governing body: Implementation of decision 27/4 on the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services**

## **I. SUGGESTED ACTION BY THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME**

1. The Assembly may wish to consider suggested action along the lines proposed below:

Welcoming the outcome of the second session of the Platform's Plenary (IPBES-2) held from 9 to 14 December in Antalya, Turkey, whereby the Plenary of the Platform adopted a number of key decisions (as set out in decisions IPBES/2/1 – 9<sup>1</sup>), and in particular the first work programme of the Platform;

Requesting the Executive Director to establish a dedicated trust fund for IPBES, as set out in IPBES decision IPBES/2/6 option 2.B in paragraph 19 (b) and transfer any fund balance from the interim fund structure that was being managed by UNEP to the new trust fund as of 1 January 2014;

Requesting the Executive Director to implement the Collaborative partnership arrangement to establish an institutional link between the Plenary of IPBES and UNESCO, FAO and UNDP, as set out in the report of the second session of the Plenary of the Platform document IPBES/2/17 in IPBES decision IPBES-2/8;

Requesting the Executive Director to engage with the work programme of the Platform, ensuring that expertise in UNEP is made available to support the implementation of the IPBES work programme;

Requesting the Executive Director to provide reports on the status and implementation of IPBES to future sessions of UNEA.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

**A. A report on the implementation of the UNEP Governing Council decision 27/4 (up to 31 January 2014), by paragraph of the decision text adopted in UNEP Governing Council decision 27/4**

***(a) Authorizes the Executive Director, within available resources, to provide the secretariat and administrative arrangements in responding to the decision adopted by the Platform Plenary at its first session on administrative and institutional arrangements for the Platform, including the secondment of a professional officer to the Platform secretariat;***

Building on the interim secretariat arrangements put into place by UNEP in 2012, the first session of the Plenary of the Platform (IPBES-1) requested UNEP to provide the Platform's secretariat and administrative arrangements in accordance with the rules of UNEP. To this end, and in response to UNEP GC 27/4, UNEP continued to provide the services of the IPBES Secretariat, in accordance with the decisions adopted by IPBES-1. The Secretariat supported the intersessional process in preparation for the second session of the Plenary of the Platform (IPBES-2), with support from UNEP-WCMC. During this period, the secretariat provided administrative and technical support to the following milestones in preparation for IPBES-2:

1. Initial gathering of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP), held in March 2013 at UNEP-WCMC in Cambridge, United Kingdom, with support from the Government of Australia, which provided the basis for the MEP to work as a team in IPBES;
2. First full MEP and Bureau meeting held from 1 - 6 June 2013 in Bergen, Norway and hosted by the

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<sup>1</sup> See also UNEA/EA.1/INF.XXX – report of the second session of the IPBES Plenary.

- Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management, which agreed on the working modalities for these bodies, and established the work required and responsibilities in the intersessional process;
3. Expert workshop on Indigenous and Local Knowledge (ILK) Systems to IPBES held from 9 - 11 June 2013 in Tokyo, Japan and co-organized with the Ministry of Environment Japan, UNESCO and UNU, which provided the basis for further work in the platform on ILK;
  4. Open online review by governments and other stakeholders for a number of documents being prepared for IPBES-2, which took place over a six week period in June and July 2013, and provided the opportunity for all governments and other stakeholders to contribute to the development of procedures and the draft work programme.
  5. LAC Regional Consultation Meeting held from 11 - 13 July, 2013 in Sao Paulo, Brazil, co-organized with the Sao Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP), which strengthened engagement in the region;
  6. IPBES Pan-European Stakeholder Meeting held from 16 -18 July, 2013 in Leipzig, Germany, and organized by German Network Forum for Biodiversity Research and other national European biodiversity platforms, which strengthened engagement in the region;
  7. Africa Regional Consultation Meeting held from 22 - 24 July, 2013 in Nairobi, Kenya, with support from the Government of Norway, which strengthened engagement in the region;
  8. Eastern Europe Regional Consultation Meeting held from 31 July - 2 August, 2013 in Budapest and Tihany, Hungary and hosted by the Centre for Ecological Research and Hungarian Academy of Science (MTA OK) with support from the Hungarian Ministry of Rural Development, which strengthened engagement in the region;
  9. Expert Workshop on the Conceptual Framework for IPBES held from 25 - 26 August, 2013 in Cape Town, South Africa, supported by the Governments of South Africa, UK and Japan, which provided the basis for the proposed conceptual framework recommended by the MEP to IPBES-2;
  10. Second full MEP and Bureau meeting, held from 27 - 31 August, 2013 in Cape Town, South Africa, hosted by the Government of South Africa with support from Government of Norway, which finalized the preparations for IPBES-2;
  11. Asia-Pacific Regional Consultation Meeting held on 3 November, 2013, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and co-organized by the Malaysia Industry - Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT) and Office of the Science Advisor, supported by the Norwegian Environment Agency, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (NRE) - the Government of Malaysia, and UNEP-WCMC, in conjunction with an informal consultation on IPBES and Capacity Building, which was held from 4 -6 November, 2013, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, which strengthened engagement in the region and provided further clarity on the possible scope of capacity building activities in IPBES.

The recruitment process for the IPBES Plenary approved positions was initiated during 2013, with one staff member being in place in Bonn during the year. Seven further positions were advertised during 2013, including the Head of the IPBES Secretariat. The successful candidate for the Head of the Secretariat was announced at IPBES-2, and Ms. Anne Larigauderie took up her position in Bonn on February 4th 2014. The remaining six positions of the IPBES-funded Secretariat are in final stages of recruitment (it is anticipated that all positions will be in place by April/May 2014). Due to administrative delays, the UNEP secondment of a professional officer was not advertised during 2013. However, the vacancy is anticipated to be announced during February 2014. UNEP is ensuring a smooth hand-over and transition from the interim IPBES secretariat team operating in Nairobi to the IPBES Secretariat hosted in Bonn.

***(b) Requests the Executive Director, in accordance with decision IPBES I/4, to enter into a collaborative partnership with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Development Programme, for consideration by the Platform plenary, in order to enter***

***into an institutional link with the Platform and its secretariat;***

The Executive Director, in accordance with IPBES Decision IPBES-1/4, was requested to enter into a collaborative partnership with UNESCO, FAO, and UNDP. A draft collaborative partnership arrangement was prepared by the four UN agencies, and submitted for consideration of the IPBES Plenary at IPBES-2. The second session of the Plenary of the Platform approved the collaborative partnership arrangement to establish an institutional link between these organizations, which is set out in the Annex of IPBES decision IPBES-2/8. This decision further invites each UN agency to approve the collaborative partnership arrangement,.

***(c) Authorizes the Executive Director:***

***i) To finalize a host country agreement with the Government of Germany for the presence of the Platform Secretariat in Bonn;***

***ii) To make those arrangements necessary for the Secretariat of the Platform to operate, with a view to having a functioning Secretariat, at the latest, by the end of the second session of the Plenary;***

The Government of Germany and UNEP have agreed on hosting arrangements for the presence of the IPBES Secretariat in Bonn. Under the arrangement, the IPBES Secretariat is on an *ad-interim* basis covered under the existing arrangements in place for the UNEP-administered Convention on Migratory Species Secretariat. Staff of the IPBES secretariat will therefore enjoy the privileges and immunities under the overall agreement between the Government of Germany and the United Nations Volunteers organization, which are mandated by the UN Secretary General to serve as the administrative umbrella for all UN-organisations in Bonn. As reported above, the Secretariat was initiated in Bonn during 2013, and the transition of the functions of IPBES Secretariat from Nairobi to Bonn will be completed during 2014. In addition to the administrative hosting services, and along with support from UNESCO, FAO and UNDP, UNEP will continue to provide broader programmatic and administrative support to the IPBES Secretariat as envisaged in the collaborative partnership arrangement.

***(d) Requests the Executive Director to continue to receive financial contributions that are provided for the Platform, until the Platform's Trust Fund is established;***

The second session of the Plenary of the Platform held in December 2013 requested UNEP to establish a dedicated trust fund for IPBES, as set out in IPBES decision IPBES/2/6 option 2.B in paragraph 19 (b) and transfer any fund balance from the interim fund structure that was being managed by UNEP to the new trust fund as of 1 January 2014. The IPBES trust fund is currently being established by UNEP, and all remaining IPBES funds held by UNEP as 1st January 2014 along with additional funds received from 1 January 2014 will be transferred into the IPBES dedicated trust fund once it is established and operational.

At the time of IPBES-2 in December 2013, UNEP had received a total of USD 16,925,805 in cash and pledges for IPBES to date, including USD 3,376,129 in cash during 2012, USD 4,323,176 in cash during 2013, and an additional USD 9,226,500 in pledges for 2013. An additional USD 8,778,000 had been received in pledges for the period 2014-2018.

***(e) Requests the Executive Director to submit input and suggestions, following the procedures and guidance agreed by the IPBES plenary, and based on the findings of GEO 5, to inform the development of the initial work programme of the platform;***

United Nations bodies related to biodiversity and ecosystem services were invited by IPBES-1 to submit inputs and suggestions, as determined by their respective governing bodies, to inform the development of the initial work programme. To this end and as requested by UNEP GC decision 27/4, UNEP submitted a selection of inputs and suggestions, following the procedures and guidance agreed by the IPBES plenary, and based on

the findings of fifth Global Environment Outlook (GEO 5). The suggestions included elements related to: a foresight (horizon scanning) process for biodiversity and ecosystem services; a comprehensive global assessment on the status and trends in biodiversity and ecosystem services and the consequences of their change for human well-being; a regional assessment for Africa; establishing a data centre / data management approach such that data brought together and used within global and regional assessments can be made available to the global research and policy community; promoting novel approaches to the mapping and modelling of biodiversity and ecosystem services; promoting the mapping and modelling of the spatial and temporal distribution of pressures and threats on biodiversity; supporting the work to measure the achievement of the 20 Aichi Targets; and a strong emphasis on communicating the science and other work of IPBES. The submissions by UNEP provided an opportunity to inform IPBES with UNEP priorities, including those resulting from the GEO-5 assessment process.

***(f) Also requests the Executive Director to report on the implementation of the present decision at its next session;***

The current document provides this report, and UNEA may consider that regular reporting on the status and implementation of IPBES to future sessions of UNEA might be useful.

**B. Summary of key decisions adopted by IPBES-2**

The second session of the Platform's Plenary (IPBES-2) held from 9 to 14 December in Antalya, Turkey adopted a number of key decisions, including:

1. An initial work programme for the Platform for the next five years, supported by strong commitment to its implementation through existing pledges totalling more than half (US\$ 25.4 million) of the total US\$ 43.5 million budget for the 5-year work programme. The work programme deliverables cover all four functions of the Platform: capacity building, knowledge generation, assessment and policy support. In addition, the IPBES conceptual framework was also adopted as presented by the interim MEP and will form the basic common ground for the work of IPBES;
2. Procedures for the preparation of IPBES deliverables, which provide clear means of implementing the work programme 2014-2018, with some outstanding procedures to be further considered in the future, for example relating to the use of local and indigenous knowledge;
3. Procedures for the nomination and selection of the future Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, which will be used as the basis for the selection of the MEP for a 3 year period by the next session of the Plenary;
4. A collaborative partnership arrangement between the Platform and UNEP, UNESCO, FAO and UNDP, which aims to provide a framework for collaboration between the four UN bodies and IPBES, in support of the Platform and its Secretariat; and
5. Financial and budgetary arrangements for the Platform, including agreement that UNEP would establish and manage the IPBES Trust Fund.

The meeting report and related decisions in all languages can be found at the IPBES website: [www.ipbes.net](http://www.ipbes.net). In addition, implementation of the work programme is underway and further details on the schedule and upcoming activities are being made available on the IPBES website. It is anticipated that the third session of the Platform's Plenary (IPBES-3) will be held in January 2015 in Bonn, Germany.