

### Info Sheet 3

\*This document has not been formally edited

### Regular Assessments (regional, global, thematic, and methodological)

#### Glossary:

IPCC: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

IPBES: Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

GEO: UNEP's Global Environmental Outlook

Plenary: decision making body of the panel/platform

MEP: IPBES' 25 member geographically-balanced Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP) that addresses scientific and technical issues in parallel to Bureau that addresses administrative issues (see Info Sheet 1)

SPM: Summary for Policymakers

The time to produce an IPCC or IPBES assessment is typically about three to four years (similar to the time to produce a GEO assessment). The process entails the following steps:

1. Plenary decides an assessment is needed on topic x, and instructs the secretariat to produce a scoping document in consultation with the Bureau/MEP and a number of independent experts.
2. The secretariat sends a request to member states to nominate independent experts to scope the assessment
3. The MEP, in consultation with Bureau, selects a geographically and intellectually balanced set of experts
4. The experts, together with a sub-set of Bureau/MEP members, develop a first draft of the scoping document
5. The draft scoping document is sent to member states to review and send suggested changes
6. The expert group develop a second draft of the scoping document, which is then reviewed by the MEP/Bureau and sent to member states to review and approve at the next plenary
7. Plenary approves the scope of the assessment and agrees on a budget and workplan and directs the secretariat to implement the assessment
8. The secretariat sends a request to member states to nominate independent experts to prepare the assessment – based on the approved scoping document
9. The MEP, in consultation with Bureau, selects a geographically and intellectually balanced set of experts to prepare the assessment – they select co-chairs, chapter lead authors, lead authors, and review editors for each of the chapters approved in the scoping document, and identify experts for the peer-review
10. A first draft of the assessment is prepared
11. The first draft is reviewed by experts (and possibly member states)
12. A second draft is prepared taking into account all review comments, and a first draft of the Summary for Policymakers (SPM) is prepared
13. The second draft of the chapters and the first draft of the SPM are reviewed by member states and experts
14. A final set of chapters is prepared for acceptance by the plenary, and a second draft of the SPM is prepared
15. The second draft of the SPM is sent to member states 6-8 weeks prior to the plenary which will review and approve the SPM
16. Member states send comments to the secretariat identifying key issues for debate at the plenary

17. The plenary reviews and approves the SPM, and accepts the chapters
18. IPBES has on occasion, and is now considering instituting an additional review of the SPM by member states after step 14.

- A: Steps 1-7 take one year or more – the time interval between plenaries
- B: Steps 8 and 9 take 2-3 months for member states to submit nominations and about 2-3 months for the MEP/Bureau to select the authors and fill gaps in expertise – total of about 4-6 months
- C: Steps 10 and 11 take 6 months to prepare the first draft and 3 months for the peer-review – total of 9 months
- D: Steps 12 and 13 take about 6 months to prepare the second draft and 3 months for expert and member state review – total of 9 months
- E: Steps 14-17 take about 6 months to prepare the final chapters and second draft of the SPM and hold the plenary

Therefore, the time from the plenary deciding that an assessment is needed to the time to approve the assessment is typically about 3 to 4 years.

*Potential ways to shorten the process and their implications (one or more of these suggestions could be applied for horizon scanning/rapid assessments)*

- A: The plenary could empower the MEP/Bureau to develop the scope of the report, in conjunction with a set of independent experts - the MEP/Bureau would identify and select the experts, taking into account geographic, gender and intellectual balance. The draft scoping document would be sent for member states to review and to suggest changes, and the MEP/Bureau would be empowered by the plenary to finalize the scoping document – i.e., it would not go back to plenary for approval - this step could be completed in 6 months or less, rather than one year.
- B: Member states and scientific bodies could be only given 6 weeks to nominate experts, and MEP/Bureau 6 weeks to select the experts and fill any gaps – hence 3 months rather than 4-6 months, or MEP/Bureau could be delegated with identifying and selecting the authors, saving more time
- C: A first draft could be developed in 4 months rather than 6 months and only allow 2 months for the peer-review – hence 6 months rather than 9 months
- D: A second draft could be developed in 4 months rather than 6 months and only allow 2 months for an expert – member state review, hence, this step could be reduced from 9 months to 6 months
- E: This step would be hard to shorten because it would take 3-4 months to finalize the chapters, produce the second draft of the SPM, and deliver them to member states 2-3 months prior to the plenary

Therefore, assuming the assessments undergoes two rounds of review to ensure the production of a high quality assessment, then the shortest time required from the initial decision to prepare an assessment by plenary to approval by plenary is about 2.5 years.