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**Ad hoc open-ended working group on a science-policy panel  
to contribute further to the sound management of  
chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution  
Second session**

Nairobi, 11–15 December 2023  
Item 4 of the provisional agenda\*

**Preparation of proposals for the establishment of a science-policy  
panel**

**Background document on the arrangements for identifying and  
engaging with experts to contribute to the work of the panel and  
on procedures for the review and adoption of reports and  
assessments produced by the panel**

**Note by the secretariat**

The annex to the present note contains background information relating to the arrangements for identifying and engaging with experts to contribute to the work of the science-policy panel and procedures for the review and adoption of reports and assessments produced by the panel. The ad hoc open-ended working group on a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution may wish to consider the information provided.

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\* UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/1.

## Annex\*

1. The first section of this annex provides brief summaries of the arrangements for identifying and engaging experts used in existing science-policy interfaces, notably the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), International Resource Panel (IRP), Global Environment Outlook (GEO), and Montreal Protocol assessment panels. Many of the examples detailed in the tables below relate to processes that are specific to the production of assessment. Table 1 provides an overview of the general roles and responsibilities for experts contributing to the development of science-policy interface deliverables. Table 2 provides an overview of the process deployed for selecting co-chairs of assessments. Table 3 provides a summary of processes for the nomination and selection of experts. The second section of this annex provides an overview of the procedures for the review and adoption of reports used by IPBES, IPCC, IRP, GEO, and Montreal Protocol assessment panels.

### I. Arrangements for Identifying and Engaging Experts

**Table 1. General roles and responsibilities for experts contributing to the development of science-policy interface deliverables<sup>1</sup>**

| <b>Title</b>                    | <b>Role</b>   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>Co-chair</b>                 | Assumes responsibility for overseeing the preparation of a report. Co-chairs are responsible for ensuring that a report is completed to the highest scientific standard.  |
| <b>Coordinating lead author</b> | Assumes overall responsibility for coordinating major sections and/or chapters of an assessment report. Coordinating lead authors are lead authors who have the added responsibility of ensuring that major sections and/or chapters of a report are completed to a high standard and are completed and delivered to the report co-chairs in a timely manner and conform to any overall standards of style set for the document.  |
| <b>Lead author</b>              | Assumes responsibility for the production of designated sections or parts of chapters that respond to the work programme on the basis of the best scientific, technical and socioeconomic information available. Lead authors typically work in small groups that are responsible for ensuring that the various components of their sections are put together on time, are of a uniformly high quality and conform to any overall standards of style set for the document.  |
| <b>Contributing author</b>      | Prepares technical information in the form of text, graphs or data for inclusion by the lead authors in the relevant section or part of a chapter. Contributions are sometimes solicited by lead authors, but unsolicited contributions are also encouraged.  |
| <b>Review editor</b>            | Assists in identifying reviewers for the expert review process, ensure that all substantive expert and government review comments are afforded appropriate consideration, advise lead authors on how to handle contentious or controversial issues and ensure that genuine controversies are adequately reflected in the text of the report concerned. In order to carry out the tasks allocated to them, review editors will need to have a broad understanding of the wider scientific, technical and socioeconomic issues being addressed. |
| <b>Expert reviewer</b>          | Comments on the accuracy and completeness of the scientific, technical and socioeconomic content and the overall balance between the scientific, technical and socioeconomic aspects of the drafts.   |
| <b>National focal point</b>     | Prepares and update the list of national experts required to assist in the implementation of the work programme, and to arrange for the provision of integrated comments on the accuracy and completeness of the scientific, technical and/or socioeconomic content and   |

\* The annex has not been formally edited.

<sup>1</sup> Sources of information include: Decision IPBES-3/3, Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work, Global Environment Outlook (GEO) Intergovernmental and Expert-led Scientific Assessment Procedures document, Policies and Procedures of the International Resource Panel, and Decision XXIV/8 of the Montreal Protocol.

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
|               | the overall balance between scientific, technical and/or socioeconomic aspects of the drafts. Will also liaise with the secretariat regarding the logistics of the review process(es).  |
| <b>Fellow</b> | A form of capacity building, fellows collaborate with the coordinating lead authors and lead authors in developing sections or parts of chapters. Fellows receive training to gain in-depth understanding of the assessment process. Fellows will be paired up with a mentor for the assessment period and are expected to participate in the author meetings and training workshops. |

**Table 2. Process for selecting co-chairs of assessments<sup>2</sup>**

| IPCC   | IPBES   | GEO   | IRP  | Montreal Protocol assessment panels  |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| Nominations are provided by governments of a Member of the IPCC. Co-chairs are <b>elected</b> by a simple majority vote by the Members of the IPCC | Co-chairs are <b>selected</b> by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP) from the list of nominations provided by governments and relevant stakeholders. | The Executive Director will nominate, invite and <b>select</b> appropriate co-chairs, vice-chairs of the assessment and a rapporteur from the available assessment experts. | The Steering Committee reviews the candidatures submitted by Members of the Panel, Steering Committee and secretariat and <b>appoints</b> the Panel Co-Chairs <sup>4</sup> . | Co-chairs are nominated by individual parties and <b>endorsed</b> through MOP decisions. |

**Table 3. Summary of processes for the nomination and selection of experts<sup>3</sup>**

|                             | IPCC   | IPBES   | IRP   | GEO   | Montreal Protocol assessment panels |
|-----------------------------|--|---|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| Who can nominate/submit?    | Governments, observer organizations, and relevant stakeholders                             | Governments, expert institutions  | Members of the Panel, Steering Committee, and secretariat. Additionally, a call for interest is published on IRP website. | Member States, expert institutions and individuals  | Parties to the Montreal Protocol    |
| What are the various roles? | Coordinating lead authors, lead authors, contributing authors, and review editors, fellows | Co-chairs, coordinating lead authors, lead authors, contributing authors, review editors, and | Lead authors, contributing authors, review editors  | Coordinating lead authors, lead authors, contributing authors, fellows, reviewers, review editors | Co-chairs and Panel members         |

<sup>2,3</sup> Sources of information include: Decision IPBES-3/3, Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work, Global Environment Outlook (GEO) Intergovernmental and Expert-led Scientific Assessment Procedures document, Policies and Procedures of the International Resource Panel, and Decision XXIV/8 of the Montreal Protocol.

<sup>4</sup> The Panel Co-Chairs are not co-chairs of any one particular IRP assessment- their role extends to the overall work of the IRP. The Panel has two Co-Chairs, one from a developed country and one from a developing country.

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|  |  | government-designated national focal points, fellows  |   |  |  |
| What criteria are informing the selection process? | Scientific, technical, and socio-economic expertise, geographical representation (with a focus on developing countries), gender balance, and a mix of experienced and new IPCC members.  | Scientific, technical, and socioeconomic expertise, geographical representation (with a focus on developing and developed countries), diversity of knowledge systems, and gender balance.   | Scientific expertise/knowledge, distinguished career, commitment to academic rigour and teamwork, availability to contribute as author and/or review editor, willingness to disseminate and advocate for the work of the IRP, gender balance, and geographic representation                 | Disciplinary, gender, and geographic balance, representation of developing and developed countries, diversity of languages and knowledge systems   | Expertise, gender balance, geographic balance, and complementarity of knowledge areas. The Technology and Economic Assessment Panel (TEAP) uses an annually updated matrix of needed expertise for nominations. Nominating parties should consult with the Panel co-chairs and fill out a specific nomination form. Both the matrix of needed expertise and the nomination form are available on the <a href="#">TEAP portal</a> . |
| Who determines selection?                          | Relevant Working Group/Task Force Bureau, under general guidance and review provided by the Session of the Working Group. Coordinating lead authors and lead authors selected by the Working Group/Task Force Bureau may enlist other experts as contributing authors to assist with the work. | The MEP, in consultation with the Bureau. An assessment management committee finalises the allocation of coordinating lead authors, Lead Authors and Review Editors to the respective chapters, from the pool of authors selected by the MEP. | Panel Co-chairs and three Panel members (excluding those members whose terms are to be renewed) review Panel member candidatures and recommend potential members. The secretariat reviews the recommendations, consults the Steering Committee, and appoints new and renewed Panel members. | Coordinating lead authors, lead authors, fellows, reviewers and review editors are selected by UNEP Executive Director with advice from the Intergovernmental and Multistakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG) and the co-chairs and vice-chairs of the assessment. The Multidisciplinary Expert Scientific Advisory Group (MESAG) will provide scientific oversight and advice on the selection of authors, fellows | Membership is established through endorsements in decisions of the Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol   |

|  |  |  |   |                     |  |
|--|--|--|---|---------------------|--|
|  |  |  | Lead Authors, Review Editors, and Expert Reviewers are selected by Panel Co-chairs. Contributing Authors are selected by Lead Authors | and review editors. |  |
|--|--|--|---|---------------------|--|

### Other considerations

2. **IPCC:** The cha assessment co-chairs are members of the Bureau, whereas in the case of the IPBES, co-chairs, chapter lead authors, and lead authors are not allowed to be members of the Bureau/MEP.
3. **IPBES:** If the pool of nominations received from governments and stakeholders lacks geographic, disciplinary and gender balance, the procedure for filling gaps in the availability of experts is utilized as outlined in Annex I to decision IPBES-4/3. In such a case, the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel may suggest potential experts and ask the report co-chairs to suggest potential experts. The secretariat compiles those suggestions and upon confirmation of interest from the potential experts, forwards a list of potential experts for selection by the MEP.
4. **IPBES** has a mechanism to facilitate the participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) in its work. This participatory mechanism is promulgated in IPBES/5/15. Indigenous and local knowledge liaison groups, which comprise the indigenous and local knowledge experts and experts on indigenous and local knowledge selected for the various chapters of each individual assessment, are established for each assessment. IPLCs can participate in scoping assessments, participate as assessment authors, share indigenous and local knowledge around assessment by means of dialogue workshops, etc.
5. **IRP:** Panel Members serve a 4-year term, renewable for up to two additional terms. If by the end of the approved term, the Panel member is a lead author, contributing author, or review editor of an on-going IRP study and assessment, the expert remains as a Panel member until 6 months after the launch of the relevant study and assessment subject to approval by the secretariat.
6. **TEAP:** Co-chairs should have experience or skills in managing, coordinating, and building consensus in technical bodies, in addition to possessing technical expertise in relevant areas. The co-chairs of TEAP should not be co-chairs of a Technical Options Committee (TOC). The co-chairs of a TOC should not normally act as co-chairs of another TOC. The TEAP and TOC co-chairs may suggest to individual parties experts to consider nominating.

## II. Overview of the procedures for the review and adoption of reports

7. The procedures for the review and adoption of reports used by IPCC, IPBES, IRP, GEO, and the assessment panels of the Montreal Protocol are briefly summarized below. Significant similarities are observed between the procedures used by IPCC, IPBES and GEO.

### IPCC

8. Procedures on the use of literature are found in Annex 2 of Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work. It aims to ensure that use of literature is open and transparent. In the assessment process, emphasis is to be placed on the assurance of the quality of all cited literature. Priority should be given to peer-reviewed scientific, technical and socio-economic literature if available. Additional procedures are provided which are specific to authors (coordinating, lead, contributing), review editors, co-chairs, and the secretariat.

9. The IPCC follows a comprehensive two-step review process involving expert and government reviewers. First, the draft reports are circulated to expert reviewers, including those nominated as coordinating lead authors, lead authors, review editors, or contributing authors. Expert reviewers provide comments to the lead authors. A second review is conducted by governments and experts, with integrated sets of comments sent to the Working Group/Task Force Bureau Co-chairs. The IPCC emphasizes the objective, open, and transparent review process. Review comments are taken into account by the authors, and any dissenting opinions may be reflected in editorial notes in the final report.
10. IPCC reports can be accepted, adopted, or approved. Acceptance signifies a comprehensive, objective, and balanced view of the subject matter without line-by-line discussion. Adoption involves endorsement section by section, and approval refers to detailed, line-by-line discussion and agreement. The plenary accepts the main report and approves the Summary for Policy Makers line by line.
11. Summaries for Policymakers are approved line by line by the appropriate Working Groups and subsequently accepted by the Panel. Overview chapters of Methodology Reports are adopted, section by section, by the appropriate Working Group or in case of reports prepared by the Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories by the Panel. In the case of the Synthesis Report the Panel adopts the underlying Report, section by section, and approves the Summary for Policymakers.
12. The Protocol for addressing errors is found in Annex 3 of [Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work](#). Its use should be reserved for errors of fact or accuracy, and only to correct errors that could have been avoided in the context of the information available at the time the report was written. The entry point for error reporting is the secretariat, and detailed procedures are outlined based on the type of report/assessment the error is identified in.

## **IPBES**

13. The Platform's process for the use of literature is open and transparent. It states that in the assessment process, emphasis is to be placed on the assurance of the quality of all cited literature. Priority should be given to peer-reviewed and publicly available scientific, technical and socioeconomic literature, including assessment reports such as those produced for the Platform. It is recognized that, besides this peer-reviewed and publicly available literature, other diverse sources provide crucial information for Platform reports. These sources may include reports by governments, industry and research institutions, international and other organizations, or conference proceedings. All sources of information must be publicly available. The use of such diverse sources, however, brings with it an extra responsibility for the author teams in ensuring the quality and validity of cited sources and information. It further specifies that newspapers and magazines, blogs, social networking sites and broadcast media, and personal communications providing scientific results are not acceptable sources of information for Platform reports.
14. The IPBES uses a two-stage review process which involves expert and government reviewers. The first draft of a report is circulated to expert reviewers, and comments are provided to the lead authors through the secretariat. A second review is conducted by governments and experts, with comments submitted to the secretariat. The review process aims to ensure scientific integrity, balance, and transparency. Responses to each review comment are recorded.
15. Once finalized, The IPBES reports go through a validation process<sup>5</sup> conducted by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and Bureau. Then the assessments/reports are presented to the IPBES Plenary for approval, acceptance, or adoption depending on the type of report. The plenary adopts Synthesis Reports section-by-section, approves the thematic and methodological assessment summaries for policymakers (SPMs), regional/subregional assessment SPMs, Global assessment SPMs, Synthesis SPMs line-by-line, and accepts the thematic and methodological assessment reports, regional/subregional assessment reports, Global assessment reports, technical summaries.
16. In cases where errors are identified in previously approved, accepted, or finalized report/technical papers, the issue should be brought to the attention of the secretariat, which will implement an established process for error correction.

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<sup>5</sup> Validation indicates that all procedures have been followed.

## IRP

17. Guidelines on the use of literature are established in [Annex 4](#) of the Policies and Procedures of the International Resource Panel. These guidelines provide information on the types of information that can or should not be used, which should be prioritized, and on the use of information that is not publicly available.

18. The IRP conducts an external expert review process coordinated by review editors, with support by the IRP secretariat. The external review process is preceded by an internal review process. The first draft is submitted to the Steering Committee for input and recommendations and to the Panel for approval to proceed to external peer review. After approval of the first draft, the review editor and expert reviewers are appointed, and the external expert review process is carried out as per [Annex 3](#) of the procedures document. With support from the secretariat, the review editors prepare an external review work plan; ensure that expert reviewers receive the draft scientific study and assessment and review guideline documents; ensure that Expert Reviewers adhere to timelines; consolidate all review comments; ensure that comments are taken into account by the relevant Working Group, and report about the process to the Panel and Steering Committee. The review editors also ensure scientific integrity, and expert reviewers provide comments on the accuracy and completeness of the assessment.

19. Once the external expert review process is completed, the Working Group prepares the second draft of the scientific study and assessment based on input received from the review editor and expert reviewers. The second draft is submitted to the Steering Committee for input and recommendations and the to the Panel for approval as “ready for publication”.

20. The review editors ensure that comments are taken into account by the relevant Working Group, and a revision or rewrite may be conducted if approval is not obtained. Annex 5 of the Policies and Procedures of the IRP on the Protocol for Addressing Possible Errors in IRP Publications was not available online at the time of the review.

21. The report is approved as "ready for publication" by the Panel after the second draft, and dissenting opinions may be reflected in editorial notes. The approval of the second draft requires the agreement of two-thirds of the total number of Panel members (excluding members involved in the preparation of the report). Panel members may ask to reflect dissenting opinions on an editorial note in the scientific study and assessment, along with a brief summary of the external expert review process and remaining dissents, if any. If approval is not obtained, and the Panel asks to revise or rewrite parts or the full report, the steps described in paragraphs 73(d) and 73(e) of the [procedures document](#) shall be followed, which refer to an external expert review process and the preparation and review of the second draft.

## GEO

22. Procedure on the use of Indigenous and local knowledge, citizen science, as well as grey literature can be found in the [Intergovernmental and Expert-led Scientific Assessment Procedures document](#), and its procedure for the use of literature is taken verbatim from [appendix II of the IPBES Procedures for the preparation of Platform deliverables](#).

23. The GEO uses a two-stage review process that involves governments and expert reviewers. The first order draft of the report is peer reviewed by experts in an open and transparent process using established peer review guidelines. The co-chairs/vice-chairs of the assessment, coordinating lead authors, lead authors and contributing authors then prepare the second order and subsequent drafts of the report under the guidance of the Executive Director, with advice from review editors, Multidisciplinary Expert Scientific Advisory Group (MESAG) and the Intergovernmental and Multi stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG), in their specific roles and responsibilities. The co-chairs/vice-chairs of the assessment and coordinating lead authors should prepare the first order and subsequent drafts of the summary for policymakers under the guidance of the Executive Director, with advice from the MESAG and the IMAG, in their specific roles and responsibilities, who will assist the authors to ensure that the summary includes the appropriate policy-relevant materials. The second order and subsequent drafts of the assessment report and the first order and subsequent drafts of the summary for policymakers are then reviewed by both governments and experts in an open and transparent process.

24. An Ad hoc Open-Ended meeting is then held, while taking note of the validation provided by the IMAG and MESAG for the GEO process and as a matter of formality and without discussion of

content, will accept the full report, if the validation indicates that all procedures have been followed. The ad-hoc open-ended meeting will also review and Member States may approve through a line-by-line discussion, the summary for policymakers as set out in section 4 of the GEO Procedures.

25. If a reader of an accepted GEO report, approved Summary for Policymakers or finalized thematic assessment finds a possible error (e.g., a miscalculation or a factual inaccuracy) the issue should be brought to the attention of the secretariat, which will implement the defined process for error correction as outlined in UNEP/A.5/Res.3.

## **Montreal Protocol assessment panels**

26. The Montreal Protocol Assessment Panels operate independently in preparing their reports without interventions from the parties to the Montreal Protocol. The parties' involvement is limited to reviewing and adopting the Panel's terms of reference (TORs) and its deliverables including its reports. Once the reports are prepared, parties review them, seek clarifications, formally discuss the Panel findings at Montreal Protocol meetings and, if they deem necessary, request the Panels to provide further information in subsequent reports through adoption of relevant decisions.

27. More specifically, the TORs of the Panels' reports, including their scope and objectives, are set out in decisions adopted by the parties to the Montreal Protocol. Contrary to the process used by IPCC, IPBES, GEO, and the IRP, the Panels are responsible for preparing the reports without interventions from the parties, including peer-review and acceptance/approval of the assessments. For the Quadrennial Assessment Reports, the timeline is set out in the decision requesting the Panels to prepare them; see, for example, para. 1 of [Decision XXXI/2](#). For reports requested to be submitted for consideration by the OEWG or the MOP, corresponding decisions include relevant provisions, see for example para. 3 of [Decision XXXI/6](#).

28. Once the reports are prepared, the parties review them (but do not conduct peer-review) and seek clarifications if needed. They formally discuss the findings of the Panels at Montreal Protocol meetings. In case of errors in the reports, corrigenda may be produced. If the parties deem it necessary, they can request the Panels to provide additional information or reports through the adoption of relevant decisions.