

Info Sheet 1

*This document has not been formally edited

Science-policy interfaces for climate change and biodiversity: a brief overview

UNEA [resolution 5/8](#) (adopted in March 2022) decided that a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution (SPP-CWP) should be established. In so doing, UNEA essentially opted for “Option A: an independent platform” as laid out in the [Assessment of options for strengthening the science-policy interface at the international level for the sound management of chemicals and waste](#) (UNEP Chemicals 2020). This option is described as “most analogous” to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). Since the IPCC and IPBES are common points of reference when discussing science¹-policy interfaces, this info sheet highlights their key design features.

IPCC and IPBES each act as an interface between the scientific community, which generates knowledge, and the international treaties and national governments, that make and implement policies in their issue areas.

	IPCC	IPBES
Institutional Design	independent intergovernmental panel with its own rules of procedure.	independent intergovernmental platform with its own rules of procedure
Scope	All aspects of climate change, i.e., natural and anthropogenic processes that control the climate; the impacts of, and adaptation to climate change; and mitigation of climate change.	All aspects of biodiversity and ecosystem services, i.e., drivers of biodiversity loss, implications of biodiversity loss for human well-being, and options to conserve and restore biodiversity.
Functions	Conducts methodological, thematic, regional and global assessments, identifying knowledge gaps and stimulating new research.	Conducts methodological, thematic, regional and global assessments, identifying knowledge gaps and stimulating new research. Also explicitly has capacity-building activities and facilitates access to policy support tools and methodologies.
Governance Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plenary is the decision-making body, where only Member States have voting rights. Observers are allowed to attend and have voice. Plenary approves, <i>inter-alia</i>, the programme of work, budgets, and approves and accepts assessment reports.• 34² member geographically balanced Bureau to address both	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plenary is the decision-making body, where only Member States have voting rights. Observers are allowed to attend and have voice. Plenary approves, <i>inter-alia</i>, the programme of work, budgets, and approves and accepts assessment reports.• Ten-member geographically balanced Bureau to address administrative issues.

¹ Science here is an inclusive term that includes natural and social sciences, humanities, economics, technology, law, and indigenous and local knowledge.

² The number has normally been 30, but additional members have been added recently, and the current number for the seventh assessment is 34 – an increase in the number of African and Asia members

	<p>administrative and scientific/technical issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12-member Executive Committee to facilitate the timely implementation of the work programme. • three standing Working Groups, which conduct assessments, (WGI: science, WGII: impacts/adaptation, WGIII: mitigation), each working group supported by a Technical Support Unit (TSU) • a Task Force on national greenhouse gas inventories • ad-hoc group and task group can be established as needed • Data Distribution Centre (DDC) provides a transparent, traceable, stable and assessable archive for the climate, socio-economic and environmental data and scenarios used in the reports and key figures produced by the IPCC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 member geographically balanced Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP) to address scientific and technical issues. • Task Forces for its different activities, for example: indigenous and local knowledge, capacity-building, knowledge and data, scenarios and models... • Technical Support Units for each assessment
Principles	<p>Similar principles, including, that assessments should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - be policy relevant, not policy prescriptive; - be interdisciplinary, including indigenous and local knowledge; - strive for geographic balance and gender equality; - be transparent, impartial, credible and scientifically robust; - be complementary to, and coordinated with, the work of relevant MEAs; - address conflicts of interest; - be flexible and cost-effective. 	
Rules of Procedures	<p>IPCC and IPBES have well-established procedures, including for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - developing a work programme; - scoping, nominating and selecting authors, peer-review, and acceptance and approval of assessment reports; - the roles and responsibilities of Plenary, Bureau/MEP, secretariat, TSUs, authors, and peer-reviewers; and - financial contributions. 	
Co-sponsoring agencies / UN Partner Agencies	UNEP and WMO ³	UNEP, UNDP ⁴ , FAO ⁵ and UNESCO ⁶
Secretariat provider	WMO	Hosted by Germany, with UNEP providing Administrative services

³ World Meteorological Organization

⁴ UN Development Programme

⁵ UN Food and Agriculture Organization

⁶ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

MEA⁷ Engagement	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	Treaties related to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including: CBD ⁸ , CMS ⁹ , Ramsar ¹⁰ , CITES ¹¹ , UNCCD ¹²
Stakeholder Engagement	Engagement within the IPCC emphasizes participating as authors, review editors, contributing authors, chapter scientists, and expert reviewers. Observer policy: any non-profit body or agency qualified in matters covered by the IPCC, whether national or international, governmental or intergovernmental, may be admitted as an IPCC Observer Organization.	IPBES emphasizes the role of authors, review editors, contributing authors, chapter scientists, and expert reviewers. Maintains a stakeholder registry, stakeholders can join self-organized stakeholder networks. “Stakeholder Days” held immediately preceding plenary.
Communications and Outreach	Communications strategy last updated 2016. Communications Action Team (CAT) established under the Executive Committee.	The IPBES 2030 work programme includes “communicating and engaging” as one of its six objectives to strengthen the involvement of the members and stakeholders and to increase the visibility of IPBES and the use of IPBES products.
Financing	IPCC Trust Fund finances the Panel and its activities, funded by regular contributions from WMO and UNEP, and voluntary contributions from its member governments and the UNFCCC	IPBES Trust Fund finances the Platform and its activities. The Trust Fund is open to voluntary contributions from all sources, including Governments, UN bodies, the Global Environment Facility, other intergovernmental organizations and other stakeholders, such as the private sector and foundations. The amount of contributions from private sources must not exceed the amount of contributions from public sources in any biennium.
Budget – Does not include significant in-kind support for TSUs, nor the volun-	Most recent budgets (IPCC-52 2020) ¹³ : 2020: CHF 8,627,688 (revised) 2021: CHF 8,945,928 (proposed) 2022: CHF 6,087,068 (forecast) 2023: CHF 5,348,128 (indicative)	Most recent budgets (IPBES-9 2022): 2022: USD 8,873,599 (revised 2022) 2023: USD 10,322,910 2024: USD 10,148,828 (provisional)

⁷ Multilateral Environmental Agreement

⁸ Convention on Biological Diversity

⁹ Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

¹⁰ Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

¹¹ Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

¹² UN Convention to Combat Desertification

¹³ IPCC-LVII/Doc. 2 circulated in advance of IPCC-57 (scheduled for 27 – 30 September 2022) lists the following:

2022: CHF 7,592,618 (revised)

2023: CHF 8,248,818 (proposed)

2024: CHF 7,788,378 (forecast)

2025: CHF 7,515,978 (indicative)

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