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### **INFORMATION NOTE**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Delegations  
Subject: Eight Session of the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES-8)  
(virtual, 14-24 June 2021)  
- Statements by the EU and its Member States

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Delegations will find in the Annex, for information, a compilation of statements/speaking points delivered on behalf of the European Union and its Member States at the abovementioned meeting.

**Eight Session of the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform  
on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES-8)  
(virtual, 14-24 June 2021)**

**Compilation of EU and its Member States Statements and Speaking Points**

**Agenda item 1: Opening of the session**

**Opening Statement**

"Madam Chair,  
Your Excellences,  
Distinguished Executive Secretary,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Portugal speaks on behalf of the European Union Member States that are members of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), and of the European Union in its capacity of an enhanced observer.

Considering the exceptionally difficult circumstances we are all facing, we would like to express our sincere thanks to the Executive Secretary of IPBES, her team and all others who have been involved in preparing the virtual Eighth Session of the IPBES Plenary. We would also like to thank the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel for their tireless efforts in maintaining momentum for the implementation of the IPBES work programme in these extraordinary times.

Despite the challenges, we believe that the experience accumulated during this past year will provide us with valuable lessons for the future, especially in terms of developing and embracing new ways of working together. We are constantly learning to make virtual collaboration part of our everyday activities. While we see both advantages and disadvantages to virtual negotiations, we would like to highlight in particular the environmental and budgetary merits of the new virtual world.

Our work at this Plenary will help advance the Platform's current work programme, lay foundations for its future activities, and provide policymakers with solid scientific evidence on biodiversity and ecosystem services. The IPBES rolling work programme up to 2030 will substantially support the implementation, monitoring and reviewing of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, the Sustainable Development Goals and other relevant multilateral objectives.

The United Nations General Assembly has declared the period from 2021 to 2030 to be the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. This creates a unique opportunity for IPBES to highlight the importance of biodiversity, namely the multiple benefits and valuable services that healthy ecosystems provide for people and the key role these play in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

We welcome the Report of the Executive Secretary on the progress in the implementation of all aspects of the rolling work programme up to 2030, including the progress made in the five task forces, which we regard as fundamental in reaching the programmes' objectives. We acknowledge the outstanding relevance of all IPBES deliverables in providing the knowledge base for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity for long-term human well-being and sustainable development.

We appreciate the quality of the work undertaken for the scoping report for the nexus assessment and the scoping report for the transformative changes assessment. Both planned assessment are highly relevant for national as well as global biodiversity policy processes.

We welcome the progress made in the preparation of the "Methodological assessment regarding the diverse conceptualization of multiple values of nature and its benefits, including biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services", the "Thematic assessment of the sustainable use of wild species" and the "Thematic assessment of invasive alien species". We also welcome the report of the IPBES workshop on biodiversity and pandemics and believe it will provide important scientific input for the ongoing IPBES assessments.

We also welcome efforts to strengthen collaboration with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as climate change and biodiversity loss share many common drivers that must be tackled together. We also welcome the publication of the report of the IPBES and IPCC co-sponsored workshop as an important step towards increasing joint activities of the two bodies. This is an important knowledge source with a view to the upcoming negotiations in Kunming (COP15) and Glasgow (COP26) later this year as biodiversity loss and climate change should be addressed in an integrated and coherent manner.

Regarding the budget of the Platform, we note with satisfaction that savings made have improved the financing situation. This will allow the Plenary to engage in a productive discussion on how to ensure the highest quality work within the second work programme. However, we note with concern that only a small number of IPBES members continue to make voluntary financial contributions, which creates risks for the sustainable long-term viability of the budget and its objectives.

The EU Member States that are members of IPBES, and the EU in its capacity of an enhanced observer, will do everything in their power to ensure the successful outcome of the Eighth Session of the Plenary.

We wish all participants a fruitful online meeting and look forward to the discussions in the days ahead.

Thank you, Madam Chair".

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## **Agenda item 2: Organizational matters**

### **(a) Adoption of the agenda and organization of work**

The EU and its Member States that are members of IPBES support the proposed agenda and organisation of work.

### **(b) Status of the membership of the Platform**

The EU and its Member States that are members of IPBES welcome the new members of IPBES.

### **(c) Election of officers**

In view of the exceptional circumstances surrounding this eighth Plenary session, EU Member States that are members of IPBES, and the EU in its capacity of an enhanced observer, will support the adoption of a procedural decision that, notwithstanding rules 15 and 29 of the rules of procedure, will extend the term of office of the current members of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel until the end of the ninth session of the Plenary and the term of office of the current members of the Bureau until the end of the tenth session of the Plenary.

In the election of replacement to any of the Bureau or Multidisciplinary Expert Panel member, the EU and its Member States that are members of IPBES, will follow guidelines adopted for the IPBES-6 meeting:

1. Evaluate the candidates against the following criteria: continuity of the MEP, familiarity with IPBES, experience at the science-policy interface, interdisciplinary expertise, and scientific excellence. Evaluation can result in scoring with “0”, “1”, “2” and “3”, to reflect that the candidate does not meet the criterion, meets it to a little, to a medium, or to a large extent, respectively. In addition, the nominated experts should be able to demonstrate that they have secured the necessary financial support to participate in MEP activities.
2. Select the five highest ranked candidates, taking into account, if necessary, the gender, disciplinary and geographic (EU/non EU) balance.

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## **Agenda item 3: Admission of observers**

Paragraphs 14, 16 and 17 in the Draft policy and procedures for the admission of observers remain entirely bracketed in document IPBES/8/10. The main issues concern paragraph 14 and to lesser degree paragraph 16.

The strongly preferred position of the EU and its Member States that are members of IPBES remains that issues related to the Observers (admission, their status, suspension) should be regarded in a strict and fully transparent manner, taking into account the variety of subjects eligible for this status. Therefore, the right to approve the admission of Observers, as well as suspending the status should be given to the Plenary and not to the Bureau (paragraph 16 of the Draft policy and procedures as in document IPBES/8/10).

In order to ensure that no Member has the right to preclude a subject of becoming Observer on unreasonable grounds, objections to the admission of the Observers should be expressed by at least one third of the Members present (paragraph 14 of the Draft policy and procedures as in document IPBES/8/10).

Paragraph 13 still mentions a list of applicants “not approved” by the Bureau, whereas the bracketed paragraph 14 mentions “accepted” by the Bureau. The wording should be edited to get a coherent text.

Alternatively, the EU and its Member States that are members of IPBES may agree to apply the interim procedure for the admission of Observers to sessions of the Plenary, as described in paragraph 22<sup>1</sup> of the report of IPBES-1 and applied for all subsequent sessions of the Plenary *mutatis mutandis*, at the eight session of the Plenary.

### **Suggestion for amendments in the proposed document:**

14. The Plenary of the Platform will decide [on the admittance of Observers recommended on the list] on the admission and participation of all Observers in accordance with its rules of procedure, and Observers accepted approved by the Bureau as detailed in paragraph 13 (numbered 14 in document IPBES/6/14) may be admitted to a meeting of the Plenary and participate in it [as long as no Member of the Platform objects.] [unless at least one third of the Members present at the meeting object.]

16. If Observer status has to be withdrawn for any reason, the chair may suspend the Observer status of that observer subject to ratification by the [Bureau] [Plenary].

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<sup>1</sup> IPBES/1/12 Paragraph 22: “The Plenary agreed that the following procedure would be applied to the admission of observers to its second session: (a) The observers represented at the first session of the Plenary will be admitted and do not need to resubmit their requests for admission; (b) With regard to new observers, the following procedure will be applied solely for the second session of the Plenary: (i) Any body or organization, which is qualified in matters covered by the Platform, should inform the secretariat of the Platform of its wish to be represented at the second session of the Plenary; (ii) The Bureau will review the list of those who expressed their wish to be represented at the second session of the Plenary as observers, upon submission of such list by the secretariat; (iii) The Bureau will make recommendations on the admission of new observers to the second session of the Plenary and communicate those recommendations to members of the Platform at least eight weeks before the opening of the second session of the Plenary; (iv) Any member of the Platform may communicate its view on the recommendations of the Bureau, which should be received by the Bureau at least two weeks before the opening of the second session of the Plenary; (v) If there are concerns among some members of the Platform regarding the request by a body or organization for its admission to be observer of the Plenary, the Bureau will inform the body or organization of such concerns; (vi) At the second session of the Plenary, a member of the Platform may reject the admission of a body or an organization to be an observer of the Plenary, and such rejection will stand unless overruled by two-thirds majority of the members of the Platform present and voting.”

#### **Agenda item 4: Credentials of representatives**

No specific actions were required on behalf of the EU and its Member States that are members of IPBES under this agenda item.

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#### **Agenda item 5: Report of the Executive Secretary on the implementation of the first work programme for the period 2014-2018**

The EU and its Member States:

1. Welcome the Report of the Executive Secretary on the Progress in the implementation of all aspects of the rolling work programme up to 2030, approved by the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in its decision 7/1.
2. Confirm the high quality and timeliness of IPBES deliverables;
3. Acknowledge that the various IPBES products support efforts to improve the knowledge base for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity for long-term human well-being and sustainable development;
4. Welcome the progress in the scoping on assessing the interlinkages among biodiversity, climate, water, food, energy and health (nexus assessment) set out in IPBES/8/3, and in the scoping on assessing the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and the determinants of transformative changes (thematic assessment) to achieve the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity set out in IPBES/8/4, as well as the planned methodological assessment of the impact and dependence of business on biodiversity and nature's contributions to people (business and biodiversity assessment), and their relevance for the national and global biodiversity processes, especially the implementation of the CBD post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework;
5. Also welcome the progress made in the preparation of the methodological assessment regarding the diverse conceptualization of multiple values of nature and its benefits, including biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, the thematic assessment of the sustainable use of wild species and the thematic assessment of invasive alien species;
6. Take note of the update on the recruitment of staff members to the secretariat in the period from 2019 to 2021.

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#### **Agenda item 6: Financial and budgetary arrangements for the Platform**

No specific actions are required on behalf of the EU Member States that are members of IPBES and the EU in its capacity of an enhanced observer under this agenda item.

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## Agenda item 7: Assessing knowledge:

### (a) Scoping report for a thematic assessment of the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food and health

The EU and its Member States that are members of IPBES welcome the revised version of the scoping report and recognize the improvements it has undergone since the last draft version of December 2020. The thematic assessment of the interlinkages among biodiversity, climate, water, food, energy and health (nexus assessment) will serve as a key source of expert evidence for viable policy options to support achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity, the Sustainable Development Goals and other relevant multilateral objectives.

The EU and its Member States welcome the reports of the IPBES workshop on biodiversity and pandemics and the IPBES and IPCC co-sponsored workshop on biodiversity and climate change and encourage the authors of the nexus assessment to make use of the reports in the undertaking of the assessment.

The EU and its Member States would like to suggest the following improvements and seek clarification on the following issues in the scoping report prior to its approval:

Line numbering: We suggest to include line numbers in the document in order to facilitate negotiations.

Ensuring a “true” nexus approach: The assessment is set out to inform about the complex interlinkages between biodiversity, climate, water, food, energy and health and to develop policy options that can respond to these complex interlinkages. In part I, the [relevant] interlinkages between the nexus elements will be explored. However, the nexus approach seems to fade into the background in part II, which singles out different sectoral policy responses. While the EU and its Member States appreciate the sector-specific policy options in order to make implementation more tangible, the nexus approach should be more visible in part II. Therefore, we suggest placing a clear focus on the current chapter 5, which sets out the policy options for the entire nexus. The following sector-specific chapters could be included as sub-chapters under chapter 5 (i.e., current chapter 6 would become 5a, current chapter 7 would become 5b etc.).

“Biodiversity” in the assessment: To our understanding, biodiversity, including ecosystem services and functions, is at the centre of the nexus, i.e. there are direct relationships between biodiversity and every other element of the nexus. This is outlined very clearly in part I of the planned assessment. However, in part II, this approach is not explicit, as there is (only) one chapter on “options for delivering sustainable approaches to biodiversity conservation and use, in synergy with other components of the nexus” (chapter 11) and it is not clear how biodiversity will be reflected in the other sector-specific chapters (chapters 6-10). Moreover, the policy context in Chapter 1 should make clear reference to the currently suggested CBD 2030 mission (i.e. to put biodiversity on a path to recovery) and the closely linked “No Net Loss of biodiversity” and “net positive impact” in order to prevent dilution of ecological sustainability as the reference point.

“Climate” in the assessment: It is not yet fully clear how climate will be dealt with in the assessment. In part I, “climate” is treated as an element of the nexus. However, it is currently not clear whether part II will treat “climate” as a cross-cutting issue, e.g. by mentioning it under the various sector-specific chapters. These sectors include, for example, health and food production.

“Energy” in the assessment: The EU and its Member States welcome the extension of the scope to include “energy” in the nexus assessment. The inclusion of energy is in line with the initial scoping report (IPBES/7/6) which stated that the assessment will cover “[...] interlinkages between climate mitigation and adaptation strategies [...] and how other proposed climate mitigation strategies (including land-based strategies such as large-scale afforestation and bio-energy) could affect biodiversity”. The EU and its Member States emphasize the need for including the knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities, youth, women and key stakeholders particularly regarding the energy element of the nexus. The EU and its Member States also encourage the inclusion of raw materials and mineral resources issues regarding the energy sector.

“Health” in the assessment: It is not entirely clear throughout the scoping report whether “health” will be considered only from a human health perspective (as para 8 suggests) or from a broader – One Health - perspective as stated in the initial scoping report (IPBES/7/6). Since the One Health approach is increasingly gaining in importance, the nexus assessment needs to explore broader linkages among the health of humans, animals, plants and ecosystems (see also UNEP/CBD/WHO State of Knowledge Review (2015) and IPBES/8/INF/5). In this regard, the recently created One Health High Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP) involving the WHO, OIE, FAO and UNEP in particular would benefit from the findings of this assessment. Important aspects related to health are the ecological determinants and the economy of wellbeing.

“Telecoupling”, “trade” and “consumption patterns” in the assessment: The EU and its Member States welcome the inclusion of telecoupling and international trade in the scope of the assessment. However, it is not clear how the assessment will deal with these. Given their importance and to avoid limiting the nexus assessment to local issues, we encourage the explicit inclusion of these issues in the overarching questions. In addition, The EU and its Member States also encourage the inclusion of transport as part of all nexus elements. It should also be highlighted that production and consumption (including telecoupling) are not prominently written in the chapter outline, although the most important indirect and direct drivers of change are in the scope of the document.

“Nature-based solutions” in the assessment: The EU and its Member States welcome the inclusion of nature-based solutions.

Sector-specific policy responses: The EU and its Member States appreciate the inclusion of the finance sector as an important sector to implement policy options related to the nexus. We encourage the authors to include other sector-specific responses if they seem relevant.

Cooperation among authors of different chapters: In order to achieve the “true” nexus approach as well as integrated policy responses, it is important to re-think the way in which the authors will work together in this assessment. Duplication should be avoided and synergies increased. The authors of Part I and II are encouraged to work together in developing policy options and executive summaries.

Linkages with transformative changes assessment: The EU and its Member States welcome a separate assessment of transformative changes. However, the linkages between the nexus and the transformative change assessments should be further clarified. Where do both assessments intersect and how will this be organized during the assessments in order to avoid duplication and increase synergies? The EU and its Member States encourage collaboration between the nexus and transformative change assessments, especially on issues related to common themes such as “trade” to avoid duplications of efforts.



Linkages with different MEA/international processes: The EU and its Member States would like to see more clearly how the outputs of the Nexus assessment can be linked to different MEA processes (e.g. post-2020 global biodiversity framework; SDG agenda beyond 2030; Paris Agreement). In particular, the synergies between the different biodiversity related conventions, UNFCCC, UNCCD, FAO, WHO, IEA and other relevant agreements are essential for ensuring coherence, better implementation and cooperation. Specifically for UNCCD, it would be relevant to include references to ‘land degradation’ to provide entry points for collaboration, and ensure building on the land degradation and restoration assessment. The uptake of the assessment’s findings could be increased by carefully looking into the timelines of these processes and possibly envisage focused communication of specific scientific-technical knowledge items. In addition, experiences with nexus discussions, e.g. by the Water Convention on activities related to the water-food-energy-ecosystem nexus, and the Air Convention, should be taken into account.

Timeframe of the analysis (currently 50 years): We are mindful of the fact that the assessment should be feasible, and therefore support a restricted timeframe of analysis of 50 years. Longer timeframes should only be looked at to the extent it is relevant to future possible response options. The EU and its Member States support keeping the scope manageable, while maintaining some flexibility to consider longer timescales. Emphasis should be on the current decade (until 2030) which will be decisive.

**(b) Scoping report for a thematic assessment of the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and the determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity**

The EU and its Member States that are members of IPBES welcome the revised version of the scoping report and recognize the improvements it has undergone since the last draft version of December 2020. The narrative has become more understandable thanks to considerable additions and changes. The overarching questions to be addressed in the assessment (para 15 a-j) have become clearer.

The thematic assessment of the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and the determinants of transformative changes and options for achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity (transformative changes assessment) should allow for a better understanding and identification of factors in human society at both the individual and collective levels (including behavioural, social, cultural, economic, institutional, technical and technological dimensions) that may be leveraged to bring about transformative changes for the conservation, restoration and wise use of biodiversity, while taking into account broader social and economic goals in the context of sustainable development. It will serve as a key source of expert evidence for viable policy options to support achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity, the Sustainable Development Goals and other relevant multilateral objectives.

The EU and its Member States welcome the reports of the IPBES workshop on biodiversity and pandemics and the IPBES and IPCC co-sponsored workshop on biodiversity and climate change and encourage the authors of the transformative changes assessment to make use of the reports in the undertaking of the assessment.

The EU and its Member States welcome the continuous collaboration with UNEP, UNESCO, FAO and UNDP, and would like to encourage the cooperation with further multilateral environmental agreements and other international organizations, such as the Water Convention and the Air Convention.

Member States may, in this regard, propose an addition to the draft decision, along the following lines:

## II Assessing knowledge

2. *Also approves* the undertaking of a thematic assessment of the underlying causes of biodiversity loss, determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity, in accordance with the procedures for the preparation of Platform deliverables<sup>2</sup> and as outlined in the scoping report for the assessment set out in annex [–]<sup>3</sup> to the present decision, for consideration by the Plenary at its eleventh session;

3. *Welcomes* the report on the Platform workshop on biodiversity and pandemics,<sup>4</sup> and invites the experts who will prepare the thematic assessment of the interlinkages among biodiversity, climate, water, food, energy and health [and the thematic assessment of the underlying causes of biodiversity loss, determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity](#) to make use of the report in the undertaking of [those assessments](#), in line with the procedures for the preparation of Platform deliverables;<sup>5</sup>

4. *Also welcomes* the report on the workshop on biodiversity and climate change,<sup>6</sup> co-sponsored by the Platform and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and invites the experts who will prepare the thematic assessment of the interlinkages among biodiversity, climate, water, food, energy and health [and the thematic assessment of the underlying causes of biodiversity loss, determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity](#) to make use of the report in the undertaking of [those assessments](#), in line with the procedures for the preparation of Platform deliverables;<sup>7</sup>

In addition, the EU and its Member States would like to suggest the following improvements and seek clarification on the following issues in the scoping report prior to its approval:

Line numbering: The EU and its Member States suggest to include line numbers in the document in order to facilitate negotiations.

“Underlying causes of biodiversity loss”: Although the title of the assessment calls for further elaboration on “underlying causes of biodiversity loss”, it should be better explained what this refers to in the context of this assessment. This could be done in Chapter I. Similarly, even though Chapter 4 on “overcoming challenges for transformative change” (para 28) explicitly mentions “underlying causes of biodiversity loss”, we would encourage the authors to further clarify the role of such underlying causes in the context of the assessment, as well as the extent to which this assessment builds on previous work of the regional and global assessments specifically in relation to direct and indirect drivers of change. The relation between underlying causes of biodiversity loss and the determinants/obstacles/challenges of transformative changes needs to be clarified.

The need to deliver practical, policy relevant options: Ensure that this assessment moves away from a purely academic exercise, and delivers practical, policy relevant options that will help shape the fundamental shift needed. The assessment needs to be understandable by practitioners, and allow translation into concrete actions across scales. It should explicitly address the relevant stakeholders at each scale and provide concrete steps options, and action rules. Regionally balanced case studies representing various marine and terrestrial socio-ecosystems, could be very useful in this respect. The findings of the assessment should also support measures towards and provide guidance to achieve transformative changes under the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The assessment should additionally consider operational qualitative and quantitative indicators allowing to characterize and to monitor transformative changes. Preferably, it would consider various types of biodiversity action in different regions and sectors taking into account just transformation and means to safeguard this.

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<sup>2</sup> See decision IPBES-3/3, annex I.

<sup>3</sup> The draft text of the scoping report is set out in document IPBES/8/4.

<sup>4</sup> IPBES/8/INF/5.

<sup>5</sup> See decision IPBES-3/3, annex I.

<sup>6</sup> IPBES/8/INF/20.

<sup>7</sup> See decision IPBES-3/3, annex I.

“Transformation” versus “transition”: Transformation implies systemic changes, at a certain sufficient speed. It is essential to contrast this to transition, which implies incremental changes, which gradually changes the course of affairs without causing major disruptions. This may provide time for gradual adaptation, for different sectors (for instance businesses). Transformative changes points to a more fundamental shift with more significant impact (in IPBES global assessment, it is referred to as: *“A fundamental, system-wide reorganization across technological, economic and social factors, including paradigms, goals and values”*). This is an essential point. Also, there is a risk that ‘transformation’ will be toned down to ‘incremental changes within the system’ (namely transition), which will not be sufficient to halt the biodiversity crisis. This mixing of concepts and their implications happening in this very first scoping document needs to be rectified.

Transformation in which direction: It is essential to define the desired direction of the transformation. Indeed, transformations of economic systems but also of political/cultural and social transformations have happened before at large scales, some of which had perverse and unanticipated social and environmental impacts.

“Nature-based solutions” in the assessment: The EU and its Member States welcome the inclusion of nature-based solutions as a means to accelerate transformative changes.

Role of governments, in general: The scoping document mainly talks about businesses, communities, consumers, but seems to forego on the importance and leverage of local, regional, national and sub-regional governments and institutions to better conserve, sustainably use and restore nature. Consideration of policy levers and pathways is an essential gap in this scoping document.

Role of subnational governments, specifically: Much knowledge and experience as well as leeway in decision-making regarding transformation (and the limits/challenges/potentials) sits within administrations and agencies at subnational and local levels: water management departments, environmental government agencies, waste management services, urban planning departments, educational institutions, etc. These seem to have been overlooked, as the scoping document only talks about communities on the ground and policy makers at a higher level.

Linkages with the nexus assessment: The EU and its Member States welcome a separate thematic assessment of the interlinkages among biodiversity, climate, water, food, energy and health (nexus assessment). While paragraph 22 in document IPBES/8/4 generally acknowledges the presence of strong interlinkages and calls for complementary and synergies between both assessments, such linkages between the nexus and the transformative change assessments should be further clarified. It needs to be clearly shown, how both planned assessments are complementary, and where both assessments intersect (e.g. by adding a figure) and how this will be organized during the assessments in order to avoid duplication and increase synergies.

### **(c) Work related to the interlinkages between biodiversity and climate change and collaboration with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change**

The EU and its Member States that are members of IPBES, and the EU in its capacity of an enhanced observer in general support the proposed draft decisions on work related to the interlinkages between biodiversity and climate change and collaboration with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change as set in document IPBES/8/1/Add.2.

The first part of document IPBES/8/6 on the co-sponsored workshop report is comprehensive. The second part of the note on potential forms of collaboration with the IPCC, however, does not provide sufficient information. It has been confirmed by the IPBES Executive Secretary that it has not been made in cooperation with the IPCC. It does not give enough elements to judge the added value nor the feasibility of the four theoretical options, what are the opportunities to start any of them before the renewal process of IPCC is concluded in 2023, and for which purpose they will be envisaged.

In order to enhance collaboration along the four potential forms outlined in IPBES/8/6, the EU and its Member States that are members of IPBES, and the EU in its capacity of an enhanced observer request the Bureau and IPBES Executive Secretary to invite the relevant bodies of IPCC to jointly explore procedural approaches for future possible joint activities. This proposal should enable efficient and effective collaboration, by taking into account the mandate, timetables, plans and actions of the respective bodies so that the products of collaboration are useful to both intergovernmental bodies. A decision by the IPCC plenary on collaboration between both bodies would facilitate enhancing such collaboration.

"Madam,

The EU Member States that are members of IPBES and the EU in its capacity as an enhanced observer in general support the proposed draft decisions on work related to the interlinkages between biodiversity and climate change and collaboration with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change as set out in document IPBES/8/1/Add.2. We find it would be useful to reflect on lessons learnt from the cooperation so far. We explicitly congratulate the experts of the joint IPBES IPCC workshop for the outstanding report.

In order to enhance collaboration modalities, we request the Chair, Bureau and IPBES Executive Secretary to invite the relevant bodies of IPCC to jointly explore procedural and pragmatic approaches for future possible joint activities, so that a targeted cooperation could be stepped up at appropriate timing. A decision by both, the IPBES and the IPCC plenaries on collaboration between both bodies would facilitate enhancing such collaboration.

The amendments to the draft decision will be provided to you in writing.

Thank you, Madam".

### **Suggestion for amendments to the proposed draft decision (IPBES/8/1/Add.2):**

#### **II**

##### **Assessing knowledge**

4. *Also welcomes* the report on the workshop on biodiversity and climate change,<sup>8</sup> co-sponsored by the Platform and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and invites the experts who will prepare the thematic assessment of the interlinkages among biodiversity, climate, water, food, energy and health [and the experts who will prepare the thematic assessment of the underlying causes of biodiversity loss, determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity](#) to make use of the report in the undertaking of [those assessments](#), in line with the procedures for the preparation of Platform deliverables;<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> IPBES/8/INF/20.

<sup>9</sup> See decision IPBES-3/3, annex I.

5. *Decides*, in line with the need for ongoing adaptive management, as set out in section II, paragraph 12, of decision IPBES-7/1, that with the completion of the report on the workshop on biodiversity and climate change, a technical paper on biodiversity and climate change, the preparation of which was agreed in section II, paragraph 6, of decision IPBES-7/1, is no longer required;

6. *Welcomes* the note by the secretariat on the work on biodiversity and climate change and collaboration with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change;<sup>10</sup>

7. ~~Invites the Chair~~ **Requests the Bureau** and the Executive Secretary of IPBES ~~to continue to explore with the Chair and the Secretary to invite the relevant bodies~~ of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change ~~possible joint to jointly continue to explore approaches for future~~ activities between the ~~Panel~~ IPCC and IPBES, **in accordance with their procedures**, including those set out in section II of the note on biodiversity and climate change, and to report on progress to the Plenary at its ninth session;

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## **Agenda item 8: Building capacity, strengthening knowledge foundations and supporting policy**

The EU and its Member States that are members of IPBES acknowledge the fundamental relevance of the work of the task forces for implementing the rolling work programme of IPBES.

The EU and its Member States welcome the progress made in the task forces on capacity building, on knowledge and data, on indigenous and local knowledge systems, on policy tools and methodologies and on scenarios and models.

Prior to the approval of the respective interim work plans, the EU and its Member States seek more clarification and/or suggest improvement regarding the following aspects:

### Capacity Building:

- More details on the youth workshops and fellowship programme should be shared in order to further strengthening youth involvement at national levels.
- More details on the work with collaborative supporters, the promotion of communities of practice as well as on the strengthening of national and regional capacities.
- The work of the task force will achieve greater visibility and transparency through enhanced communication about its activities.

### Knowledge and Data:

- The EU and its Member States appreciate the establishment of dialogues to actively address ways to reduce knowledge gaps identified in the completed or ongoing assessments.
- The EU and its Member States encourage the task force to also adequately consider knowledge gaps identified in the IPBES workshop report on biodiversity and pandemics and the co-sponsored IPBES/IPCC workshop on biodiversity and climate change.

### Policy tools and methodologies:

- The scale and target of activities, such as the foreseen science-policy dialogues, should be explained in a more coherent and detailed manner.
- The EU and its Member States encourage the task force to assess the policy impact of the Platform, as requested in the IPBES review, going beyond the TRACK database.

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<sup>10</sup> IPBES/8/6.

- The decision to limit the further development of the policy support gateway to a repository for IPBES products should be further explained. The focus of work under these activities should be on services to the users of IPBES products, not on the internal support for IPBES processes.

#### Scenarios and Models:

- It is crucial that the IPBES assessments benefit from information and data on existing biodiversity-relevant scenarios and models. In particular, decision IPBES-7/1 highlights the need to better understand the interactions between biodiversity and climate change. The EU and its Member States therefore suggest including the following new element "(e)" in document IPBES/8/7 under paragraph VI. B. 65.: "Currently available scenarios, including those developed by previous global-scale assessments, will be collected to inform the Platform's ongoing and planned assessments, including the Shared Socio-economic Pathways (SSP) framework that is assessed by the IPCC."
- The further development of the nature futures framework should be based on a broad and inclusive consultation with the scientific community. It is crucial that sufficient space for scientific and policy reviews of this framework is ensured in its further development before it is considered at a plenary session. Therefore, any reference to the nature futures framework should be referred to at the tenth session instead of the ninth. The EU and its Member States are concerned about the already ongoing use of this new framework by IPBES task forces and in the "Values" and "Sustainable Use of Wild Species" assessments.

The EU and its Member States also welcome the progress made in the development of the deliverables supporting objectives 2 (a), 2 (b), 2 (c) 3 (a), 3 (b), 4 (a) and 4 (b) and the initial priority topics of the work programme of the Platform up to 2030. The EU and its Member States look forward to considering them at the ninth session of the Plenary. Nevertheless, the EU and its Member States are concerned by the timeline of only approving in 2022 deliverables from activities which have already started in 2019.

The EU and its Member States furthermore take note of the IPBES data management policy (IPBES/8/INF/12).

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#### **Agenda item 9: Improving the effectiveness of the Platform**

The EU Member States that are members of IPBES, and the EU in its capacity of an enhanced observer, welcome the report by the Bureau, Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and Executive Secretary on the implementation of the recommendations by the review panel in the context of the rolling work programme of the Platform up to 2030, including solutions and/or issues identified (IPBES/8/8).

The EU and its Member States especially welcome progress made in relation to the:

- Clarification by MEP and Bureau (practical note) regarding their respective roles and duties in practice, as this seems to have increased the efficiency of the governance indeed while avoiding a revision of the existing rules and procedures by IPBES. It might also help when recruiting new members for these bodies;
- Development of a guidance on national focal point roles and good practice. Dedicated communication efforts will be needed to make sure proper uptake by the NFPs;

- Review of the use and impact of the IPBES conceptual framework;
- Efforts to further improve the effectiveness of the assessment process, and in providing lessons learned and advice from authors and other contributors of completed assessments to those undertaking future assessments. We also welcome the embracing of new ways of working, including by digital means;
- Efforts made to continue to develop the policy dimensions and relevance of the Platform, including by involving a wider range of expertise and disciplines in the scoping (e.g. business and biodiversity assessment), design and production of assessments and work related to policy support tools;
- Further advancements in the capacity-building function and the knowledge and data function of the Platform, as well as integration of indigenous and local knowledge and other knowledge systems in the activities of the Platform;

We, however, note that a few issues raised by the EU and its Member States at IPBES-7 have not yet been fully addressed:

- While we see an attempt to clarify the exact legal status of IPBES on the website, the wording used is rather technical. Though IPBES is not a UN body, nor hosted by UNEP, UNEP does provide secretariat services to IPBES and in this capacity assumes liability. It could be made clearer that the Secretariat is solely accountable to the IPBES Plenary on policy and programmatic issues).
- In view of the slow progress regarding streamlining administrative procedures, there is still considerable demand to increase efficiency of the IPBES governance, in particular regarding the cooperation between Secretariat, MEP and Bureau.
- There is a continued need to diversify funding streams, and mobilize a greater number of Members to contribute financially.
- It would still be useful to have an easy-to-understand vision and mission-narrative that could be used on website and other communication channels (no need for approval by Plenary).

Finally, the EU and its Member States propose:

- a critical review of the process for the nomination of experts, including the approach to filling gaps, particularly in expertise for preparing assessments to further improve the process of nominating experts to take part in the Platform's activities and report at IPBES-9;
- an analysis of the experience with virtual meetings and relevance for the effectiveness of the Platform and report at IPBES-9.

The EU and its Member States request the Bureau, the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Executive Secretary, in accordance with their respective mandates, to continue to take the recommendations made by the review panel into account in the implementation of the rolling work programme of the Platform up to 2030 and report on progress to the Plenary at its ninth session, and if necessary at later Plenaries, including on further solutions and/or issues identified.

The EU and its Member States also consider it relevant to pilot an additional review by governments of the summary for policymakers (SPM) of the assessment on values, to facilitate/speed up the negotiations at Plenary. Such an additional round of review could enhance the policy relevance of the SPM.

"Sir/Madam,

The EU Member States that are members of IPBES, and the EU in its capacity of an enhanced observer highlight the importance of the report by the Bureau, Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and Executive Secretary on the implementation of the recommendations by the review panel in the context of the rolling work programme of the Platform up to 2030, including solutions and/or issues identified. We request that these recommendations continue to be taken into account, and that a report on progress is made to the Plenary at its ninth session, and if necessary at later Plenaries, including on further solutions and/or issues identified.

The progress made, *inter alia*, in the development of a guidance on national focal point roles and good practice; in the review of the use and impact of the IPBES conceptual framework; in further improving the effectiveness of the assessment process, and in providing lessons learned and advice from authors and other contributors of completed assessments to those undertaking future assessments; is especially welcomed.

However, a few issues raised at IPBES 7 have not yet been fully addressed, such as the slow progress in streamlining administrative procedures, and therefore the demand to increase the efficiency of the Secretariat, and the continued need to diversify funding streams, and mobilise a greater number of Members to contribute financially to the Platform on a voluntary basis.

We propose a critical review of the process for the nomination of experts to take part in the Platform's activities, including the approach to filling gaps in the availability of experts for scoping and preparing assessments and for task forces, to be reported to the Plenary at its ninth session.

We also would like to propose an analysis of the experience with virtual meetings and their relevance for the effectiveness of the Platform, also to be reported at IPBES 9.

We support the proposal for an additional review by governments of the summary for policymakers of the assessment on values, to facilitate the negotiations at the Plenary.

The amendments to the draft decision will be provided to you in writing.

Thank you, Sir/Madam".

### **Proposed amendments to the draft decision (IPBES/8/1/Add.2):**

#### **II**

##### **Assessing Knowledge**

*Decides*, notwithstanding section 3.1 and related provisions of the procedures for the preparation of Platform deliverables,<sup>11</sup> to pilot an additional review of the summary for policymakers of the assessment report of the methodological assessment regarding the diverse conceptualization of multiple values of nature and its benefits, including biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, by Governments in July and August 2021;

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<sup>11</sup> See decision IPBES-3/3, annex I.



### Improving the effectiveness of the Platform

1. Welcomes the report by the Bureau, the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Executive Secretary on progress in addressing the recommendations set out in the report on the review of IPBES at the end of its first work programme;
2. Requests the Bureau, the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Executive Secretary, in accordance with their respective mandates, to continue to take the recommendations made by the review panel into account in the implementation of the rolling work programme of the Platform up to 2030 and report on progress to the Plenary at its **ninth session and if necessary at later Plenaries, including on further solutions and issues; such as: measures to improve the process for the nomination of experts, including the approach to filling gaps in the availability of experts for scoping and preparing assessments and task forces;**
  1. **Requests the Bureau, the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Executive Secretary, in accordance with their respective mandates to critically review the process for the nomination of experts, including the approach to filling gaps in the availability of experts for scoping and preparing assessments and task forces, and report to the Plenary at its ninth session;**
  2. **Requests the Bureau, the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Executive Secretary, in accordance with their respective mandates to analyse the experience with virtual meetings and relevance for the effectiveness of the Platform, and report to the Plenary at its ninth session;**
3. Welcomes the note by the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel on the implementation of their respective roles in practice;
4. Also welcomes the progress made by the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel in developing a note on the use and impact of the conceptual framework of the Platform and invites members, observers and other stakeholders to provide their comments on the draft note to the secretariat by 30 July 2021.

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### Agenda item 10: Organization of the Plenary; dates and venues of future sessions of the Plenary

The EU and its Member States that are members of IPBES, and the EU in its capacity of an enhanced observer are concerned that the IPBES 9 agenda is quite full and it will be hard to effectively address all the proposed items unless proper preparatory activities have taken place. Lessons learned from virtual meetings must be taken into account during the preparation of the future Plenaries, especially with respect to preliminary meetings and activities. We also propose that the Nature Futures Framework to be discussed at IPBES 10, instead at IPBES 9, so that the scientific community has the necessary time to review the suggested concept.

"Sir/Madam,

The EU Member States that are members of IPBES, and the European Union in its capacity of an enhanced observer, welcome the steps taken to organize this Plenary, as well as the dates and venues proposed for future sessions of the Plenary.

The IPBES 9 agenda is raising some concerns about its feasibility due to the extent of matters to be addressed and prepared. The experience with virtual meetings undertaken during the current intersessional period should be taken into account when preparing future Plenaries, especially with regard to organising appropriate preliminary meetings to advance the preparation of agenda items.

In light of the above we propose that the Nature Futures Framework is discussed at IPBES 10 so that the scientific community has the necessary time to review the suggested concept.

We would like to thank the United States of America for offering to host this important plenary session in 2023.

Thank you, Sir/Madam"

### **Suggestion for amendments to the proposed draft decision (IPBES/8/1/Add.2):**

The Plenary may wish to consider the following draft decision on the organization of the Plenary and dates and venues of future sessions of the Plenary under item 10 of the provisional agenda:

#### *The Plenary*

1. *Decides* that the ninth session of the Plenary will be held from [--] to [--] 2022;<sup>12</sup>
2. *Also decides* to accept with appreciation the offer by the Government of [--] to host the ninth session of the Plenary in [--], subject to the successful conclusion of a host country agreement;
3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to hold consultations with the Government of [--] to negotiate a host country agreement, in conformity with General Assembly resolution 40/243 and in compliance with the provisions of United Nations administrative instruction ST/AI/342, with a view to concluding and signing the host country agreement as soon as possible, to organize the ninth session of the Plenary in close collaboration with the host country and to invite the members and observers of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services to participate in the session;
4. *Requests* the Bureau to decide on the modalities of the ninth session, including the possibility of holding [preparatory meetings or](#) the meeting [itself](#) online should circumstances not make an in-person meeting feasible;
5. *Decides provisionally*, pending final confirmation at its ninth session that the tenth session of the Plenary will be held from [--] to [--] 2023;<sup>13</sup>
6. *Also decides provisionally*, pending final confirmation at its ninth session, to accept with appreciation the offer by the Government of [--] to host the tenth session of the Plenary in [--], subject to the successful conclusion of a host country agreement;
7. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to conclude and sign a host country agreement for the tenth session of the Plenary with the Government of [--] as soon as possible and in conformity with applicable United Nations rules and procedures;
8. *Takes note* of the draft provisional agendas for the ninth and tenth sessions of the Plenary, which are set out in the annex to the present decision;<sup>14</sup>
9. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to invite members and observers that are allowed enhanced participation in accordance with decision IPBES-5/4, to provide written comments on the proposed organization of work of the ninth session of the Plenary;
10. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to finalize the proposed organization of work for the ninth session of the Plenary in line with comments received at the eighth session of the Plenary and written comments received in response to the invitation referred to in paragraph 9 of the present decision.

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<sup>12</sup> It is proposed that the ninth session will be held in March or April 2022.

<sup>13</sup> It is proposed that the tenth session will be held in April or May 2023.

<sup>14</sup> The draft provisional agendas for the ninth and tenth sessions of the Plenary are also set out in annexes I and III to document IPBES/8/9.

**Agenda item 11: Institutional arrangements: United Nations collaborative partnership arrangement for the work of the Platform and its secretariat**

EU Member States that are members of IPBES, and the EU in its capacity of an enhanced observer take note of the report and welcome the continuous collaboration with UNEP, UNESCO, FAO and UNDP, and would like to encourage the cooperation with further multilateral environmental agreements and other international organizations.

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**Agenda item 12: Adoption of the decisions and report of the session**

No specific actions are foreseen at this stage. Such might become necessary as a result of the discussions held during the Plenary.

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**Agenda item 13: Closure of the session**

**Closing Statement**

"Closing Statement  
Madam Chair,  
Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished Executive Secretary,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am speaking on behalf of the European Union Member States that are members of IPBES, and the European Union in its capacity of an enhanced observer to the Platform.

The 8th Session of the Plenary of IPBES is coming to a close. It was a special session conducted in a virtual manner that allowed us to move forward in these difficult times. The Platform has demonstrated that it is ready to adapt to unforeseen situations, with a rich array of lessons to be learned for future occasions.

We are very grateful to all experts who contributed their time and expertise to the preparation of the documents and were available to answer questions that arose during discussions. IPBES relies on these dedicated people for the quality and credibility of its products. We appeal to all IPBES members to give true credit to the excellent work that the experts have carried out and will carry out in the future. After all, IPBES is about consolidating and sharing the best available knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services so that decision-makers can make well-informed choices.

We also express our gratitude to the experts who participated in the workshop on biodiversity and pandemics and in the co-sponsored IPBES IPCC workshop. The excellent workshop reports provide very valuable information to address the planetary emergency in which we find ourselves.

We support that work on capacity building, strengthening knowledge foundations and supporting policy continues, and acknowledge the fundamental relevance of the task forces and their Technical Support Units for the implementation of the rolling work programme up to 2030.

Taking this work up, last week the European Union adopted the work programme of its Research and Innovation Framework Programme for 2021 and 2022. It contains topics on biodiversity that explicitly aim at delivering results that can be used by IPBES and that will facilitate the use of IPBES deliverables in further research and policy making. This programme invites research organizations from different world regions to participate in its calls.

After 10 days of intensive debates we are happy that we completed all tasks, most notably the revision and approval of the scoping reports of the nexus and of the transformative change assessments. We believe that both assessments will be instrumental in supporting the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, in making this framework more transformational and hence more effective in tackling biodiversity loss.

We encourage IPBES to jointly continue to explore approaches for future activities with IPCC, in accordance with their procedures. We also encourage the platform to look for opportunities to collaborate with other UN bodies that could support particularly the nexus assessment by ensuring complementarity and avoiding duplication of processes.

We are pleased with progress made in addressing the comments by the review panel and hope that the Platform will continue to improve its effectiveness throughout the implementation of its rolling work programme up to 2030.

Regarding the budget of the Platform, we congratulate all participants who made pledges and contributions during this session. We hope that more members will join, which will guarantee the Platform's long-term financial viability through a balanced contribution according to the circumstances of each member.

Finally, we would like to thank you, Madam Chair, for your excellent chairing of this IPBES plenary, as well as the chairs of all Working Groups and the Contact Group for their tireless work which enabled us to accomplish all tasks. A special thanks goes to the Executive Secretary of IPBES and her team, the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel for all their efforts, and all participants of this IPBES meeting for their collaborative and fruitful interventions.

Now we say goodbye virtually. We hope to meet again in person at IPBES-9.

Thank you, Madam Chair".

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