



First session of the plenary meeting to determine modalities
and institutional arrangements for IPBES
3-7 October 2011, Nairobi, Kenya

BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT IN THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PLATFORM ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES (IPBES)

First Session of the Plenary Meeting on IPBES, 3-7 October 2011, Nairobi, Kenya

The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) could become the international reference for independent, credible scientific advice for decision-making. At the third meeting on IPBES in Busan, Republic of Korea in June 2010, governments and other stakeholders agreed to establish this new science-policy platform. This Busan Outcome was then welcomed by the 10th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010.

Through this joint statement, WBCSD and IUCN demonstrate the potential role of business in the design and implementation of IPBES.

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BUSINESS, BIODIVERSITY, AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES?

All businesses depend and impact on biodiversity and ecosystem services, and face increasing risks linked to natural resources scarcity. Some businesses are highly dependent on healthy ecosystems and biodiversity for their productivity. For instance, it has been estimated that the degradation of fishing stocks results in an \$ 80-100 billion loss of income to the fisheries sector, putting at risk 27 million jobs (TEEB, 2008).

Concurrently, the need to respond to pressing environmental challenges stimulates the emergence of new markets and business models. Businesses are actors of change and dynamic in innovation for creating ecosystem-friendly markets and developing more sustainable technologies. Biodiversity conservation is a source of innovation for pioneering businesses in emerging markets for ecosystem services and biodiversity-related products. One example includes forest industries, which have partnered with environmental organizations and social groups to develop new models of doing business, and to make use of market forces to promote sustainable forest management.

IPBES AND BUSINESS: MUTUAL BENEFITS IN THE FUTURE

The challenges to maintain, sustainably use, and restore, where needed, biodiversity and ecosystem services are complex, and require the contribution of all stakeholders to develop effective solutions. The need to engage business in IPBES is two-fold:

On the one hand, business will benefit from IPBES as it will set the reference for credible and relevant scientific knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services. Businesses are encouraged, and in many instances incentivized, to find sustainable solutions to avoid, minimize, and offset their impacts on ecosystems. Methods and tools emanating from IPBES could support decision-making on business environmental strategies and policies, the measurement of ecosystem impacts and dependencies as well as accounting and reporting. Additionally, the provision of knowledge from IPBES could set the foundations for market-based mechanisms, like biodiversity offset frameworks. Using information from IPBES would give more credibility to mechanisms used by businesses and help improve their environmental standards, therefore increasing business competitiveness and innovation.

On the other hand, involving business in IPBES will bring important, value-adding legitimacy to IPBES. Businesses are providers of information and can therefore contribute to the generation and assessment of knowledge: good practices developed for the sustainable use of biodiversity for instance are valuable sources of knowledge to be assessed by IPBES. Businesses are also decision-makers and have an important role to play in the conservation, use and management of biodiversity and ecosystem services upon which they depend. Business brings complementary perspectives to the ones from governments, which will help identify and prioritize the most relevant information gaps to be addressed by IPBES.

MESSAGES FOR THE FIRST SESSION OF THE PLENARY MEETING ON IPBES: TOWARDS A MULTISTAKEHOLDER PLATFORM THAT RECOGNIZES THE ROLE OF BUSINESS

In order to ensure mutual benefits for both business and IPBES, WBCSD and IUCN support the establishment of an overarching and authoritative platform to provide independent policy-relevant scientific information:

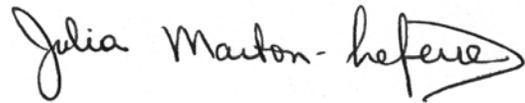
- WBCSD and IUCN acknowledge the Busan Outcome especially the ability given to the private sector to provide inputs and suggestions for IPBES governing bodies. They also take note of the possibility to contribute to the IPBES core trust fund.
- IPBES should be designed to be the authoritative source of credible policy-relevant knowledge on biodiversity, ecosystem services, and human well-being in order to facilitate access of relevant information to all decision-makers.
- IPBES should particularly aim to:
 - Assess existing knowledge, identify gaps and encourage further research in areas where it is needed;

- Deliver methods and tools that are relevant and readily usable for decision-makers and practitioners, including in the private sector.
- IPBES needs to continuously ensure the engagement of a wide range of stakeholders to secure its credibility, legitimacy and transparency. It needs to respond to the needs of the wide range of decision-makers and practitioners contributing to biodiversity, ecosystem services, and human well-being, including in the business sector.
- Business wants to engage, participate and benefit from IPBES. The first session of IPBES plenary meeting will need to further define the role of business in the governance, functions and work program of IPBES.

We wish the plenary meeting success in its deliberations, and look forward to an outcome that takes into account the needs of business as custodians and users of biodiversity and ecosystem services, and that recognizes the role that business can play in the success of a new mechanism.



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