



Drafting a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy for the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

Findings of the IPBES Stakeholder Survey

Reaching out to organisations potentially contributing to IPBES or using IPBES' products

Survey conducted from 15 March to 17 April 2013

Introduction

The International Council for Science (ICSU) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) co-organised an **online survey** to consult (potential) IPBES stakeholders on various aspects of stakeholder engagement in the IPBES programme of work. The survey was specifically designed to collect inputs on:

- The most effective ways to engage stakeholders in all aspects of the IPBES work programme;
- The type of contributions that can be expected from stakeholders; and
- Ways to ensure that the IPBES products will be useful to stakeholders.

The survey (powered by SurveyMonkey¹) was held from 15 March to 17 April 2013 and available in **three languages** (English, French and Spanish). An invitation to participate was **sent out by email in English** by the IPBES Interim Secretariat, DIVERSITAS on behalf of ICSU, and the IUCN to **more than 1500 organisations**. The invitation was also **posted on** the IPBES, IUCN and DIVERSITAS **websites** and mentioned by several other web sites (e.g. IISD, Spiral websites), and by the Stakeholder Forum on IPBES².

The invitation was sent to a wide range of organisations and informal groups in business, science, indigenous communities, local authorities, organisations, ministries, Multilateral Environment Agreements, citizen organisations, etc., active at national, regional or international levels, and having or not previously participated in IPBES meetings (table 1; full list of organisations available upon request). The IPBES Interim Secretariat also invited Members of IPBES to circulate this invitation to their respective national stakeholder communities.

Respondents were requested to coordinate their efforts within their organisation and to submit **one response per organisation**, large organisation having then the same weight than a smaller one. IUCN and DIVERSITAS, on behalf of ICSU, analysed 314 surveys. The full responses are available upon request to IUCN or DIVERSITAS³.

¹ <http://www.surveymonkey.com/>

² https://groups.google.com/forum/?fromgroups=#!topic/all_for_ipbes/X46sPFaVC3g

³ Contacts: pierre.commenville@iucn.org and anne-helene@diversitas-international.org

Table 1: Stakeholders solicited by email to participate to the online survey

Stakeholder databases

IPBES

- Participants at plenary meetings IPBBES-1 (Bonn, 2013), IPBES-MI-2 (Panama City, 2012), and IPBES-MI-1 (Nairobi, 2011)
 - Biodiversity-related conventions
 - UN organisations
 - NGOs and IGOs
 - Other observers
- Participants to Stakeholder Day in Bonn (IPBBES-1) and Panama City (IPBES-MI-2)
- Members: governments present at IPBES-1

UN

- CSD Major Groups
- UNEP Major Groups

ICSU

- ICSU Members (National Academies of Sciences; International Unions)
- ICSU programmes and projects (e.g. IHDP, IGBP)
- ICSU partner organisations
- UN organisations
- Regional and international organisations in the field of research, conservation, observation, and science-policy interface
- DIVERSITAS National Committees
- DIVERSITAS Core Projects and Cross-cutting Networks

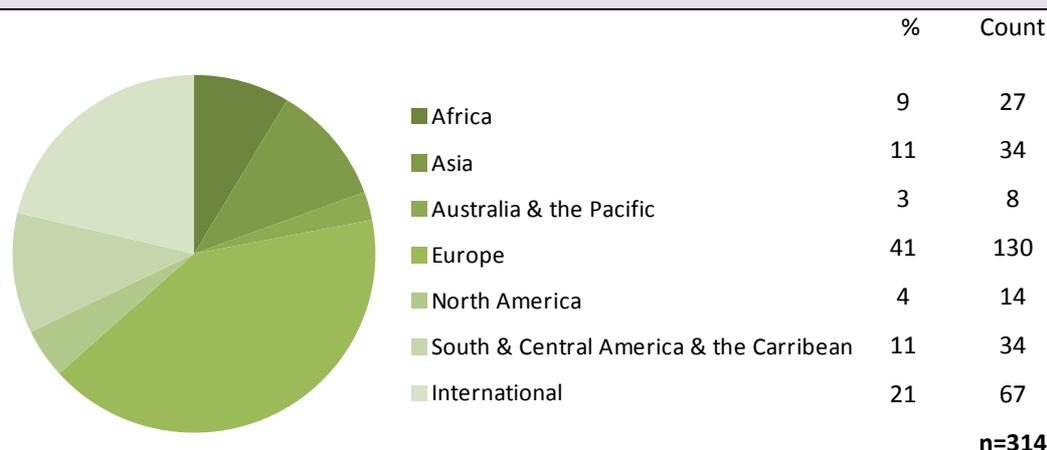
IUCN

- Members
- National and Regional Committees

Results

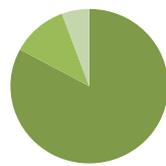
1. Respondents

1.1 Regions



There was a good coverage of the different regions of the world with the majority of responses from European-based organisations. One in five organisations works at international level. However, it is not possible to infer from these figures whether or not these organisations have an effective international reach as this mostly depends on their size.

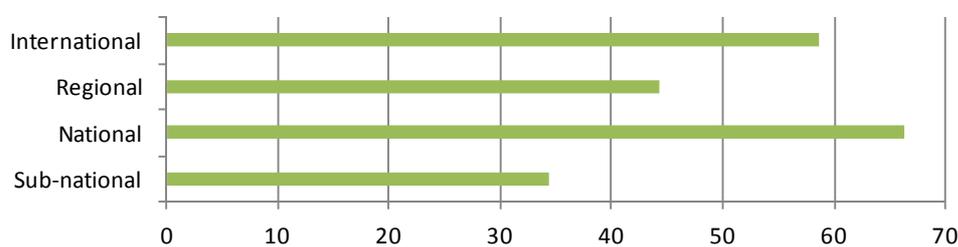
1.2 Languages of the survey



	%	Count
English	83	260
French	11	36
Spanish	6	18

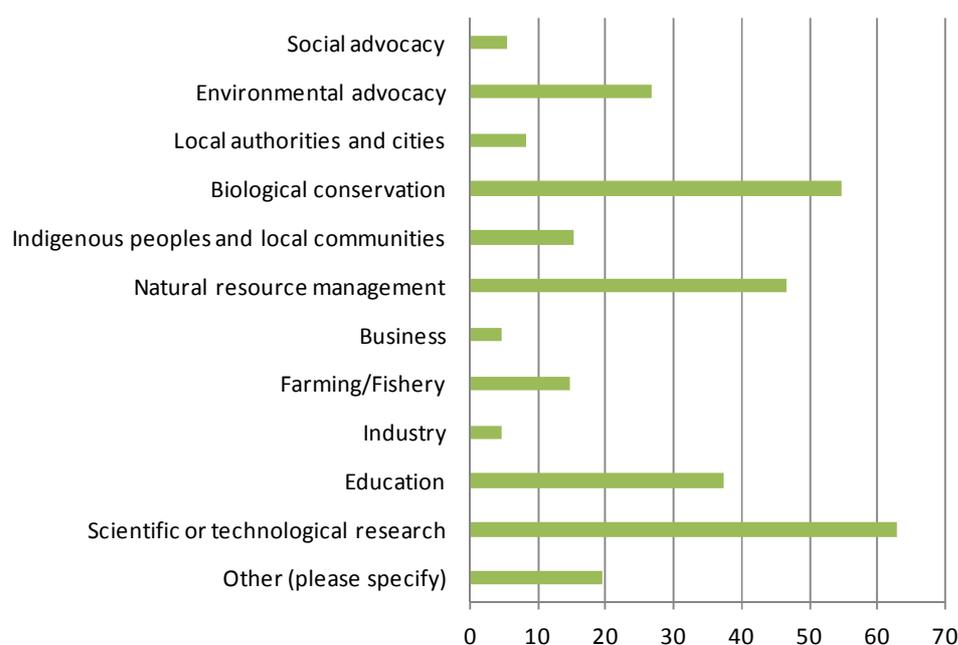
As a response to IPBES ambition to ensure balanced participation, the survey was conducted in 3 languages (i.e. English, French and Spanish).

1.3 Level(s) at which respondent organisations primarily work



Organisations work at different scales and often at even more than one. The international, regional and national levels are well represented even if international and national levels were a bit more represented.

1.4 Field(s) of work of the respondent organisations

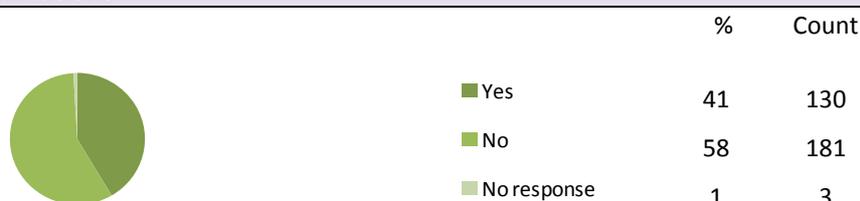


Respondent organisations mostly work in biodiversity-related sectors (i.e. biological conservation, natural resource management, and environmental advocacy) and in scientific or technological

research and education (>25% of responses in these fields).

Industry, business, local authorities and cities, and social advocacy are the sectors that responded the least (<8%). This bias in response rates mirrors the current bias in the representation of organisations that have been involved in IPBES so far. Yet, some respondents recommend engaging with high-level international business actors, like mining companies, owners of fishing fleets and agro-industry as a matter of priority.

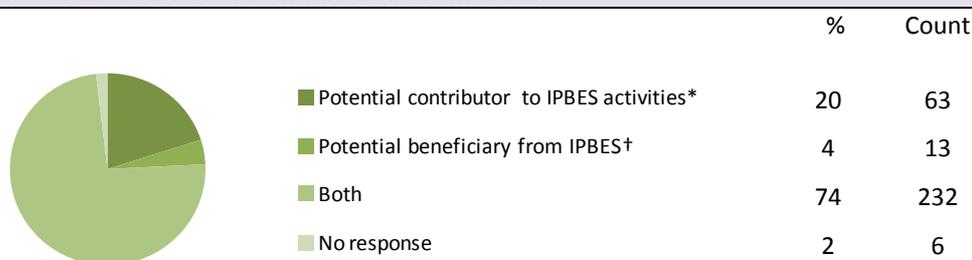
1.5 Membership-based organisations



Many respondent organisations are membership-based but responses were also received from individuals representing organisations such as universities belonging to sectors and professions that spanned biodiversity practitioners, policy makers, governments, NGOs, research institutes, learning institutions and academia, corporate actors, museums, general public, data centres and data service providers, environmental advocates, financial markets and the media. There are also indications that some respondent organisations have the capacity to reach out to several hundred other organisations, highlighting the potential for IPBES communication to be widely relayed.

2. Potential engagement in IPBES

2.1 Organisations as contributors to or beneficiaries from IPBES



Exact wording was:

*Potential contributor to IPBES activities (e.g. in providing data, information, technologies, experts)

†Potential beneficiary from IPBES (e.g. using IPBES publications and tools)

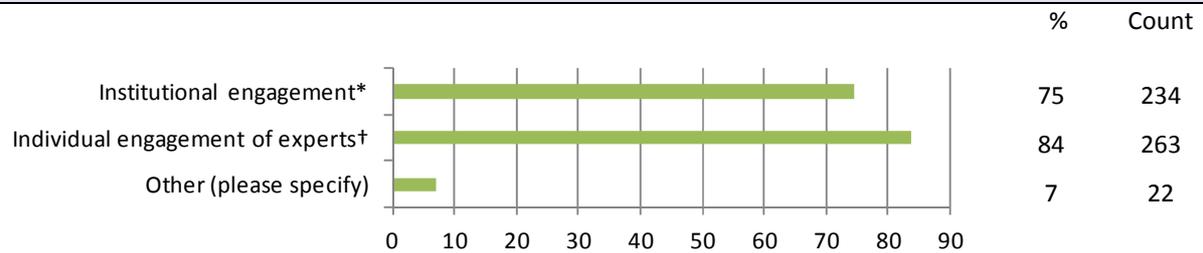
Three-quarters (74%) of respondents see their organisations as both potential contributors and beneficiaries of IPBES. Interestingly too, more respondents see their organisations as potential contributors only (20%) than as potential beneficiaries only (4%) which tends to indicate that there is a strong interest in contributing to the implementation of the IPBES work programme.

When asked to specify, respondents propose contributions that span from provision of experts and expertise, to increased access to scientifically collected data, evidence-based information and experiential knowledge. Regarding benefits, they mostly consist in the use of IPBES products to guide their own work.

Several respondents suggest that “stakeholders” should be better defined in the context of

implementing IPBES work programme and they suggest using the contributor/user terminology. As the range of activities, products and addressed topics of IPBES is very broad, many respondents suggest mapping stakeholders appropriately for every thread of work.

2.2 Types of future/potential engagement



Exact wording was:

*Institutional engagement (e.g. partnership, communication, coordinated research to fill identified gaps, funding; building capacity)

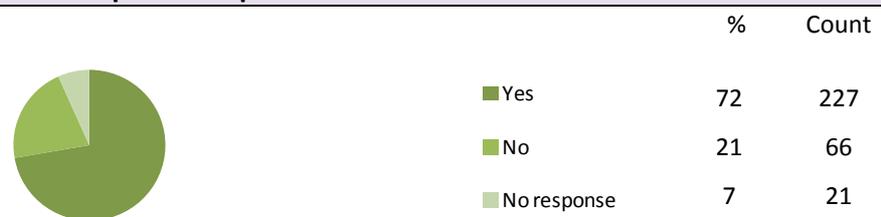
†Individual engagement of experts who would be encouraged to take part in IPBES activities

Respondents are willing to engage either at institutional or individual levels at almost equal rates (75% and 84%, respectively). 56% of them (not shown on figure) equally envision both types of engagement. They consider that institutional engagement will facilitate the individual engagement of experts from their organisation.

Respondents willing to engage at institutional level only (17%, not shown on figure) emphasise that IPBES should consider their organisation's needs and interests before setting up an institutional collaboration. They indicate that aligning the organisation's mandate with the IPBES work programme, and *vice versa*, is an important incentive for engagement.

Finally, some respondents suggest engaging heads of big networks to have access to a large number of organisations or experts, regardless of their institutional structure.

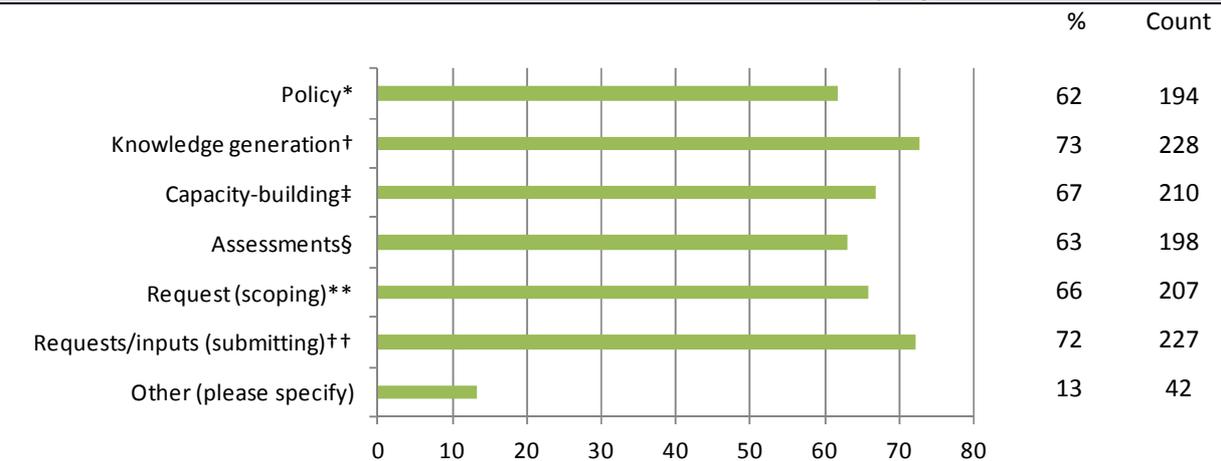
2.3 Interest in establishing a formal partnership with IPBES



Three-quarters (72%) of the respondents envision a partnership between their organisation and IPBES. When asked to specify, respondents suggest that their organisation can serve as thematic or geographic hubs, and clearinghouse mechanisms, or can conduct activities on behalf of IPBES. Many respondents envisage that a formal partnership should focus on their main topic of interest or activity, e.g. amphibian conservation, soil health management. This seems to show willingness to establish institutional linkages and engage in the activities of the work programme of IPBES, at this early stage of IPBES development.

Finally, some respondents call for an early circulation of pragmatic terms of reference for partnerships, and for transparency in the process of establishing these partnerships.

2.4 & 2.6 Potential contribution to activities related to the IPBES work programme



Exact wording was:

*Supporting policy formulation and implementation (e.g. developing policy-relevant tools and methodologies, improving access to existing tools)

†Catalysing the generation of new knowledge (e.g. identifying knowledge gaps, engaging the research community to address them)

‡Activities related to capacity-building (e.g. submitting your views on capacity-building needs, participating in donors' meetings, sharing your experience)

§Activities related to assessments (e.g. facilitating access to resources, nominating and supporting authors or editors, encouraging participation in the review process)

**Scoping a request to IPBES once it has been accepted (e.g. identifying experts, data or information, pinpointing relevant existing initiatives)

††Submitting requests, inputs or suggestions on scientific and technical matters that will be addressed by IPBES (e.g. submitting your own views on priorities, backing others' inputs)

Respondents show a strong interest in being involved in all potential activities of the four functions of the IPBES work programme (>60% for all of them).

When asked to specify, most respondents underline the necessity of coordinating requests, inputs and/or suggestions (72%) to facilitate a well-informed prioritisation process. As a way to ensure this coordination, some suggest like-minded institutions to work together to deliver coordinated inputs, while others propose national processes to inform the positions of IPBES Members. A few organisations emphasise that they can share their experience in coordinating similar processes in other initiatives. In addition, respondents who want to contribute to the scoping process (66%) mainly see the interest of being able to share database of experts. They emphasise that forming new networks is time consuming and that taking advantage of the existing, structured networks, especially in the field of nature conservation, would be very valuable.

Respondents who want to contribute to assessments (63%) emphasise the value to work with other assessments while ensuring that special care is given to the context in which each assessment is conducted. Some organisations underline that they are involved in steering and organising assessments and that this *savoir-faire* can be available to IPBES, to conduct but also to fulfil some of capacity-building needs to conduct assessments. In addition, many respondents express their willingness to be involved in the reviewing phase of IPBES reports. Some respondents advise developing specific guidelines to work with some specific stakeholder groups such as indigenous and local communities, which is an action that IPBES has already acknowledged.

Respondents interested in contributing to catalysing knowledge generation (73%) highlighted that they can do so in specific thematic areas (e.g. agro-biodiversity, disaster risk reduction), by mobilising their expert or researcher networks and using the mechanisms they have for this mobilisation (e.g. symposia, conferences, new research projects) or by facilitating the involvement of specific groups (e.g. traditional knowledge holders). In particular, they stressed recurrently that they can also help

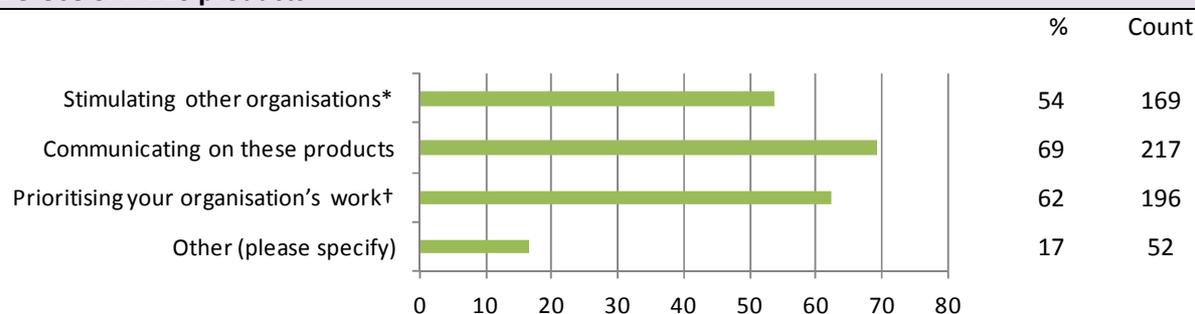
with the identification of knowledge gaps.

Respondents interested in capacity building (67%) underline the value of sharing their experience in education and training, whether in the field of biodiversity-related assessments or in policy formulation.

Respondents are less specific with respect to their contribution to developing and implementing policy tools though they express their interest in engaging in dialogues with authorities responsible for policy formulation and implementation (62%). Some large organisations have developed policy tools, especially supporting implementation of the MEAs and offer to share them with IPBES.

Finally, a few organisations suggest as other activities that they would like to be represented in the structures established by IPBES, such as in working groups if established, to implement its work programme. Some also suggest supporting activities dedicated to communication and awareness-raising and in particular they offer technical support and assistance with communication, especially in presenting IPBES results in relevant events.

2.5 Use of IPBES products



Exact wording was:

*Stimulating other organisations' support to implementing IPBES work

†Using IPBES products to prioritise your organisation's work

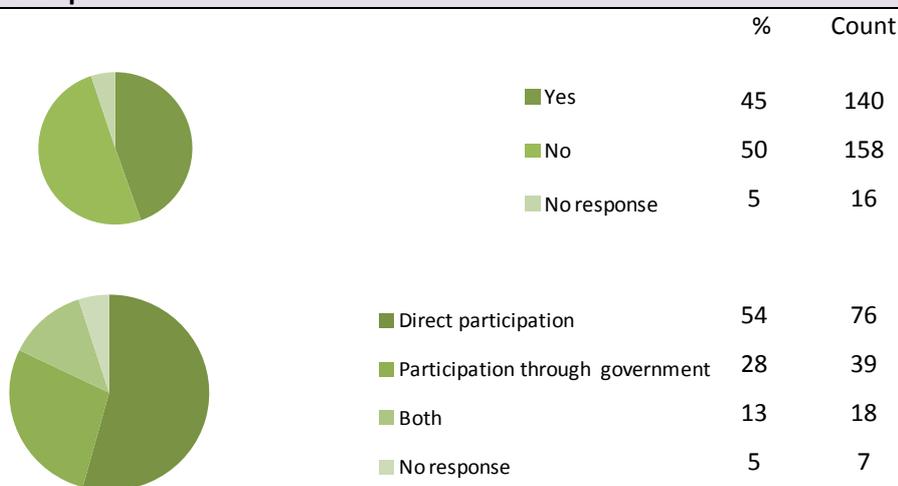
More than half respondents would use the IPBES products the three suggested ways. Respondents specified other possible uses such as to prioritise conservation activities; as reference framework to write research grants; in teaching; and in lobbying and informing the public, or in policy development. Some respondents also propose using their own communication channels to disseminate IPBES reports.

Some respondents are prepared to develop a process to endorse IPBES report showcasing their role in the production of these reports. Others also emphasise the need to involve stakeholders from the outset when developing products and tools for them.

A respondent stressed that the usefulness of IPBES products to inform activities at sub-national level need to be pondered with great care as their relevance seem more obvious for the global level, while others recommend that IPBES should address in its priorities the implementation of policies and practical applications at the local level.

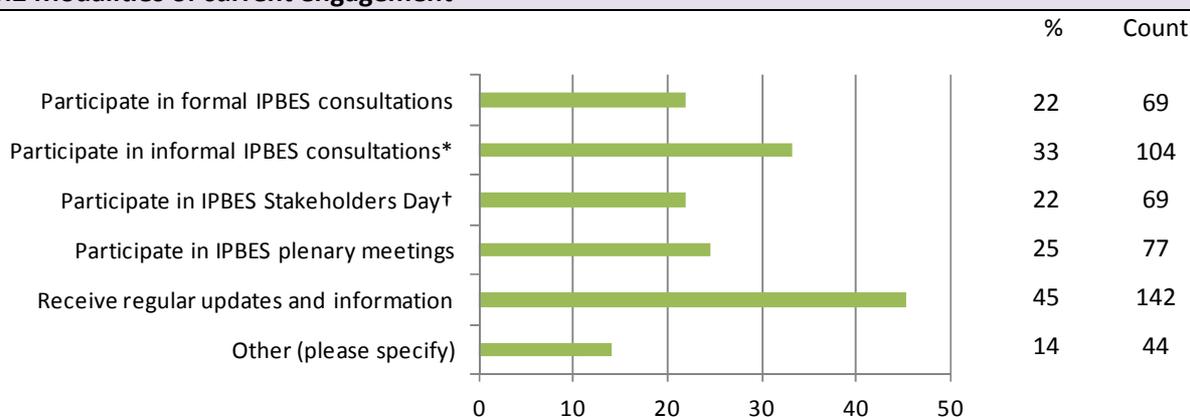
3. Incentives and enabling environment

3.1 Past contribution to IPBES process



Almost half (45%) of the respondent organisations have engaged in IPBES, mostly through direct participation in IPBES meetings and consultations (54%). In addition, many organisations mention their engagement through governments showing that some countries have set up national processes to engage stakeholders at this level.

3.2 Modalities of current engagement



Exact wording was:

*Participate in informal consultations organised by IPBES Members or other stakeholders

†Participate in IPBES observers coordination meeting (Stakeholders Day)

45% of the respondents declare receiving information on the IPBES process. Once operational, IPBES could improve this result by adjusting its mailing lists. Approximately one out of four respondents declares to have participated in an IPBES official meeting (a plenary meeting for 25% or a consultation held before such meetings for 22%).

22% of the respondents have already taken part in IPBES consultations (mostly documents open for online review) while 33% declare that they have participated in informal consultation, held at any level. This shows that local to international consultation is already playing an important role in mobilizing stakeholders and stimulating them to get engaged.

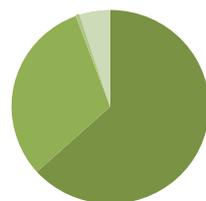
3.3 Other suggestions for future engagement

When asked about future potential engagements (i.e. open-ended question), respondents foresee a variety of ways to engage in IPBES. For instance, they propose to implement pilot projects to demonstrate IPBES findings, promote IPBES activities in their own, and mainstream IPBES work into their constituencies. Many respondents foresee benefits from the IPBES work programme but ask for clarification of IPBES priorities before formally engaging in specific activities. Some respondents also wish that there should be a more active participation of stakeholders in the process of drafting the work programme.

More generally, respondents highlight the need for specific engagement towards some activities and for specific stakeholders. They also suggest that engagement is a continuous process that should happen prior to, during and in-between sessions and that it should allow contributions from organisations, but also projects and individuals.

Several mention the need for “time compensation for experts” regardless of whether or not they are from developed countries. Some underline that, if funding depends primarily on contribution from national members, it will hamper the independence of IPBES.

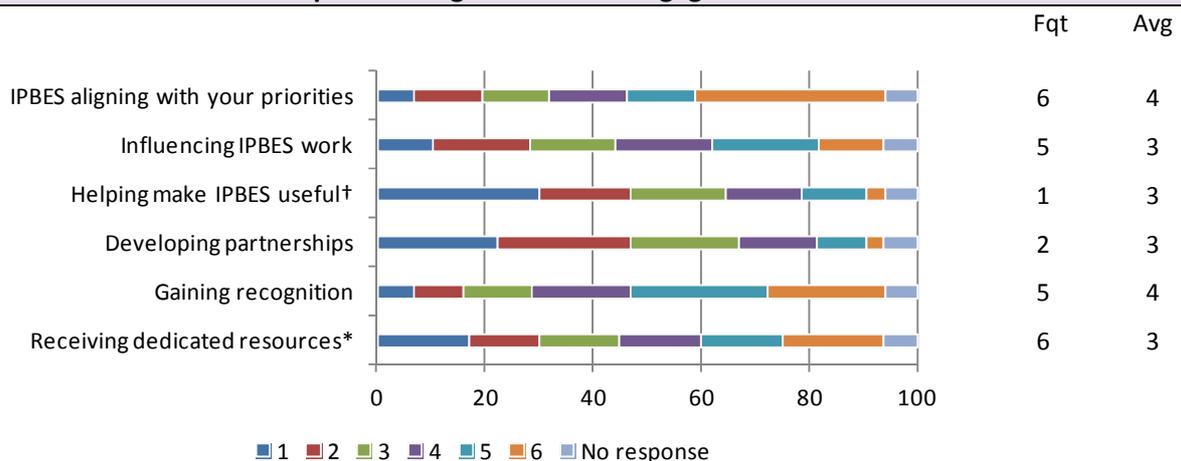
3.4 Willingness to identify a focal point for IPBES within the respondent organisations



	%	Count
Yes	63	199
Not at this stage	31	97
No	1	2
No response	5	16

Two-thirds of the respondents are willing to identify a focal point for IPBES (63%), while 31% prefer waiting further developments to decide on this.

3.5 & 3.6 Incentives for respondent organisations to engage



Explanation: Incentives proposed in the survey were ranked from 1, the most powerful, to 6.

Exact wording was:

*Receiving dedicated resources (e.g. time compensation for experts)

†Helping make IPBES and its products as useful as possible

Fqt = most frequent score; Avg = average score; 1= most powerful

The most powerful incentives for stakeholder to engage are to 1) “help making IPBES relevant” and 2) “build partnerships”. Respondents emphasise that IPBES will open opportunities for networking and for adding new outlets to existing networks, and that the opportunity to access new sources of knowledge is an extra motivation to engage.

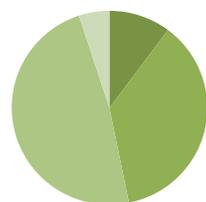
The least powerful incentives are 1) “aligning IPBES and respondent organisation priorities” and 2) “gaining recognition”. In that regard, it appears in respondents' comments that the relevance of IPBES work programme to respondents' thematic areas of work is a stronger incentive than strict alignment of respective mandates. In addition, gaining recognition through authorship of reports is an incentive, especially for researchers.

Respondents further suggest that another incentive for stakeholder engagement is IPBES Members' level of commitment in the IPBES work programme. For instance, this is the case when the Members take into consideration IPBES as the most credible and the most respectable source of knowledge. They also perceive IPBES as a way to add value to their work, for instance in disseminating their work, demonstrating the relevance of research, and leveraging funding.

Some also see participation in IPBES as an opportunity for their organisation to integrate other networks, to identify relevant stakeholders, and to enhance their capability in taking interdisciplinary approaches into their work, in particular in areas rarely or not addressed together such as biodiversity and health. Others insist that interdisciplinary setting is a key feature of IPBES that makes it innovative and that stimulates respondents' interest.

Finally, respondents also highlight that participation should be effectively maintained and not only triggered and be funded through a democratic and transparent mechanism to sustain the motivation to engage.

3.7 Potential scale of engagement



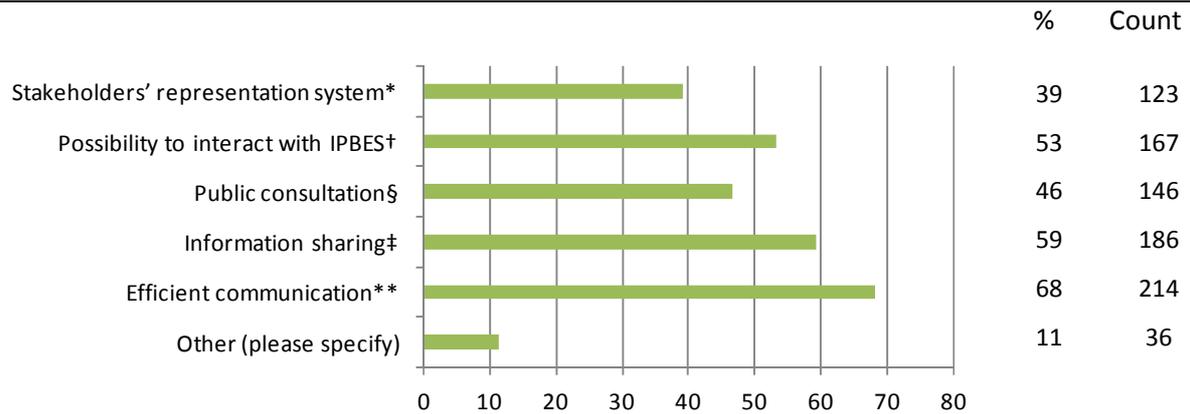
	%	Count
At the national level, through government(s)	10	32
At a scale appropriate for specific IPBES activity*	37	115
Both	48	151
No response	5	16

Exact wording was:

*At a scale appropriate for specific IPBES activity (sub-regional to global)

Half of the respondents envision their engagement with flexibility, i.e. through their government or at other specific, suitable scales. In addition, more respondents are ready to engage at a scale appropriate for a specific activity (37%) than through their government only (10%). Some respondents even call for the establishment of strong national platforms, which they believe will be the most useful mechanism to ensure stakeholder engagement.

3.8 Ways and means to ensure effective stakeholders' engagement



Exact wording was:

*Set up a stakeholders' representation system, as is the case with groupings adopted by the CSD or the UNEP Governing Council

†Give stakeholders the possibility to interact with IPBES decision-making processes (Plenary and potentially other organs)

§Conduct efficient public consultation processes

‡Support information sharing between stakeholders

**Provide efficient communication between stakeholders and IPBES

For 68% of the respondents, IPBES should set up efficient communication with stakeholders. Most of the respondents add that communication should involve a two-way flow of information. Several respondents expect a translation of concepts and ideas for different audiences, such as policy-makers or business actors. Some call for a transparent system of communication to facilitate networking, where individuals or groups are adequately identified.

Additional suggestions provided to strengthen IPBES' communication strategy include creating regional or national hubs of information, with the view of tailoring the information at the appropriate scale, establishing a stakeholder consultation board or forum in order to formally advise IPBES bodies, and enabling triangular dialogues between stakeholder groups, IPBES Members and IPBES bodies. Some respondents ask that communication should be carefully tailored to the appropriate respective scales and stages of participation and should make use of timetables that enable good planning of engagement.

Several respondents insist on the importance of translating the science-policy discussions into non-professional terminologies and a few advise to look at how to engage with the media.

59% of the respondents see a role of IPBES in supporting coordination among stakeholders, particularly through information sharing. However, they do not propose means to achieve this objective.

46% of the respondents believe that IPBES should conduct efficient public consultation, though they recognise this would be a challenge. A majority of respondents express their preference for consultations held in a culturally appropriate manner and run at local scale. Some suggest that nationally-based consultation should meet a set of pre-defined IPBES requirements to ensure consistency, whereas others suggest using established national fora and processes.

53% of respondents support the proposition of giving to stakeholders the possibility to interact with IPBES decision-making processes, such as the Plenary or the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP). Many recognise that this interaction needs some kind of facilitation. Some suggest establishing a stakeholder board having two main functions: 1) serving as entry point to stakeholder communities for the IPBES Bureau and MEP, and 2) representing a range of different stakeholder interests. As part of this process it was suggested that the initial work undertaken by the MEP could be disseminated to the stakeholder community, and that putting rapidly in place an accreditation process for

observers in the Plenary would be important.

39% of the respondents express their interest in setting up a stakeholders' representation system, as an instrument for stakeholder engagement. They emphasise the need to guarantee that such a system should not be exclusive. Respondents also cite UNEP's Governing Council, Commission on Sustainable Development, FAO's Committee on World Food Security and UNESCO as examples of stakeholder representation systems.

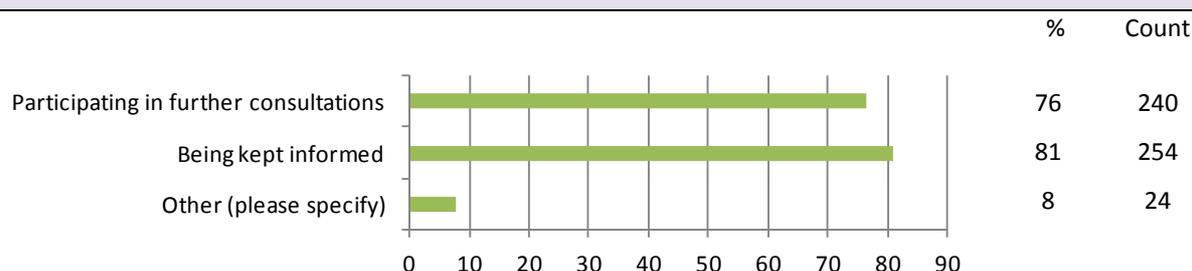
Additional comments point out the need for an enabling environment that ensures stakeholder engagement, including dedicating resources, planning support and logistics to enable effective participation and building trust between IPBES Members and stakeholders.

4. Next steps towards an engagement strategy

4.1 and 4.3 Other issues to be considered in developing a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy for IPBES

Information gathered under these sections was incorporated as extra comments in relevant sections above in order to enhance the thematic coherence of the survey findings.

4.2 Ways to be involved in the development of the IPBES Stakeholder Engagement Strategy



Overall, respondents show a great interest in being kept informed by the development of the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (81%) and a large majority would like to be further involved in its development (76%). In addition, some respondents call ultimately for a process to evaluate and improve the strategy as the IPBES programme of work is developed.