

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES  
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties  
Bangkok (Thailand), 3-14 March 2013

Strategic matters

INTERGOVERNMENTAL SCIENCE-POLICY PLATFORM  
ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

1. This document has been submitted by the Chair of the Standing Committee and has been prepared by the Chair of the Standing Committee Working Group on IPBES, in consultation with the Secretariat.

Background

2. At its 15th meeting (CoP15, Doha, 2010), the Conference of the Parties adopted a set of three Decisions on the *Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services* (IPBES), which read as follows:

***Directed to the Animals and Plants Committees and the Secretariat***

15.12 *Without taking a position about the necessity for, or nature of, such a Platform, the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees and the Secretariat shall, subject to external funding, participate in discussions concerning a possible IPBES, to provide all necessary input into the process of IPBES and to ensure that the role of CITES receives due recognition. The Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees and the Secretariat shall report to the Standing Committee to seek additional guidance.*

***Directed to the Secretariat***

15.13 *The Secretariat shall work with the United Nations Environment Programme to identify possible sources of external funding to support the participation called for in Decision 15.12.*

***Directed to the Standing Committee***

15.14 *The Standing Committee shall report at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties concerning the IPBES.*

3. Progress on implementation of the Decisions mentioned in paragraph 2 above was reported to the 61st and 62nd meetings of the Standing Committee (SC61, Geneva, August 2011; and SC62, Geneva, July 2012) in documents SC61 Doc. 15.6 (Rev. 1) and SC62 Doc. 14.5, respectively.
4. At SC61, the Standing Committee endorsed the recommendations in paragraph 5 of the Annex to document SC61 Doc. 15.6 (Rev. 1) and noted the observation in paragraph 6. These recommendations reflected the conclusions of the 25th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC25; Geneva, July 2011) and read:

*The Committees recommend that the Standing Committee endorse the following points to guide the engagement of the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees, the Secretariat and the Parties, in their engagement with IPBES.*

- a) *The Chairs of the Animals Committee and the Plants Committee and the Secretariat should participate in the IPBES plenary meetings, subject to the availability of financial resources, to ensure that CITES is properly represented; their terms of Reference should be determined by the Standing Committee*
- b) *IPBES should support and establish a regular process for seeking the views and understanding the needs of biodiversity-related Conventions and Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements*
- c) *IPBES should support access to reliable existing knowledge and generate knowledge on, and facilitate regular assessments of, the conservation and sustainable use of key species in ecosystems, including their economic valuation; IPBES should not duplicate the work of existing MEAS.*
- d) *IPBES should provide particular support to the Scientific Authorities to the Parties to CITES. This could involve:*
  - i) *Improving access to knowledge to enable the CITES bodies and Parties to fulfil their functions more effectively, especially in the making of non-detriment findings and in the review of significant trade.*
  - ii) *Documenting best practice in the use of science in biodiversity conservation and in ensuring the continued provision of ecosystem services.*
  - iii) *Providing capacity building support to CITES Scientific Authorities from developing countries, upon request, to help them fulfil their specific obligations under CITES. This would both build capacity to carry out applied science and assist in meeting obligations under the Convention.*
  - iv) *In addressing the science-policy interface from both sides, IPBES should ensure that decision makers and policy makers, such as CITES Management Authorities, benefit from capacity building support on how to obtain, interpret and use scientific advice in the taking of decisions and the adoption of policy measures.*

*Management Authorities of Parties are encouraged to coordinate and enhance information exchange with their competent national authorities for IPBES.*

5. At the first session of the plenary meeting to determine modalities and institutional arrangements for an IPBES (Nairobi, October 2011), the secretariats and chairs of scientific bodies of the six biodiversity-related conventions presented a joint statement which, *inter alia*, drew attention to the role of the conventions in conveying requests from governments to IPBES and proposed that the conventions be represented in IPBES bodies [[http://www.cites.org/eng/news/sundry/2011/Joint\\_statement\\_IPBES.pdf](http://www.cites.org/eng/news/sundry/2011/Joint_statement_IPBES.pdf)]. Recommendations by SC61 in relation to IPBES were provided in document UNEP/IPBES.MI/1/INF/16. The final report of the Nairobi meeting reflected participants' discussions on the functions and operating principles of the platform, the functions and structures of bodies that might be established under IPBES and the process and elements that might be considered in selecting the host institution or institutions and the physical location of the platform's secretariat.
6. A report by the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees and the Secretariat on IPBES and Decision 15.12 (document AC26/PC20 Doc. 5) was considered during the joint session of the 26th meeting of the Animals Committee and the 20th meeting of the Plants Committee (AC26/PC20; Dublin, March 2012). To assist their decisionmaking on the matter, the Committees established a drafting group (AC26/PC20 DG1) co-chaired by the Vice-Chair of the Plants Committee and the Regional Representative of Europe to the Animals Committee. The group's mandate was to draft a statement for presentation at the fifth meeting of the Chairs of Scientific Advisory Bodies of Biodiversity-related Conventions (CSAB; Dublin, 25 March, 2012).
7. At the second session of the plenary meeting to determine modalities and institutional arrangements for an IPBES (Panama City, April 2012) —and based on the statement drafted by AC26/PC20 (see paragraph 6)— the CSAB submitted a Joint Statement through document UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/INF/16. The secretariats and chairs of the scientific bodies of the six biodiversity-related conventions also submitted a joint statement which, *inter alia*, welcomed the establishment of IPBES and recognized its potential to contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of global biodiversity and to the implementation of the conventions (see the Annex to document SC62 Doc. 14.5). As a general outcome of the Panama meeting,

participating States adopted a resolution establishing IPBES as an independent intergovernmental body. The resolution and its appendices (i.e. on the functions, operating principles and institutional arrangements of the Platform and the rules of procedure for the plenary of the Platform), as well as the intersessional work agreed by participating States, are contained in the report of the meeting ([www.ipbes.net/previous-ipbes-meetings/second-session-of-plenary.html](http://www.ipbes.net/previous-ipbes-meetings/second-session-of-plenary.html))

8. The fifteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA15; Montreal, 30 April to 5 May 2012) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted Recommendation XVI/8 on *Ways and means to improve the effectiveness of the subsidiary body and options for collaboration with the IPBES*<sup>1</sup>. In July 2012, the Conference of the Parties to Ramsar adopted Resolution XI.6 on *Partnerships and synergies with Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other institutions*<sup>2</sup>, which addresses IPBES.
9. At SC62, the Standing Committee established a working group on IPBES, under the chairmanship of Mexico, to prepare recommendations for its discussion and decision. The working group met in the margins of SC62 and its resulting recommendations were transmitted to the Standing Committee in document SC62 Com. 6. After discussion, the Standing Committee endorsed all of the recommendations of this working group, which are reproduced below:

*The Working Group recommends that the Standing Committee:*

- a. *Accepts the invitation by IPBES for the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees to participate as observers in the IPBES Multidisciplinary Expert Panel;*
- b. *Welcomes the cooperation between the Chairs of the Scientific Advisory Bodies of Biodiversity-related Conventions and the secretariats of the conventions, in relation to IPBES;*
- c. *In accordance with Decision 15.12, agrees that the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees and the Secretariat should continue their engagement with IPBES between the current meeting and 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, including responding to written consultations and participating at the next meeting of the Platform's Plenary (scheduled for early 2013) with the objective of ensuring that:*
  - i) *There is a two-way relationship between CITES and IPBES in which CITES is a user or beneficiary of IPBES as well as a contributor to IPBES;*
  - ii) *A mechanism is developed for facilitating communication between CITES and IPBES for the conveyance of government requests to IPBES from the Conference of the Parties or the Standing Committee; and*
  - iii) *The identification of capacity-building needs and related financing by IPBES helps national scientific and management authorities to foster the use of applied science for the implementation of CITES;*
- d. *Request funding from UNEP to support attendance at IPBES meetings by the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees and the Secretariat;*
- e. *Requests the Secretary-General to discuss with the executive heads of other biodiversity-related conventions means for facilitating cooperation in relation to IPBES, including through a possible cooperative Memorandum of Understanding between the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions (BLG) and the IPBES Secretariat, and report back at the 63rd meeting of the Standing Committee;*
- f. *Establishes an intersessional working group on IPBES, including the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees and the Secretariat, to prepare a draft resolution or decisions, as appropriate, for the SC Chair to submit at CoP16 which would:*

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<sup>1</sup> SBSTTA's Recommendation XVI/8 is available at: <http://www.cbd.int/recommendation/sbstta/?id=12975>

<sup>2</sup> Ramsar's Resolution XI.6 is available at: [http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-documents-cops-cop11-cop11-resolutions/main/ramsar/1-31-58-500%5E25837\\_4000\\_0](http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-documents-cops-cop11-cop11-resolutions/main/ramsar/1-31-58-500%5E25837_4000_0)

- *Address the contribution that Parties and Convention bodies could make to reinforcing linkages between CITES and IPBES;*
  - *Propose ways in which CITES may make requests to IPBES to prepare reports and for deciding the priorities of CITES in this regard;*
  - *Review the agreed IPBES work programme following the IPBES plenary and make proposals to CoP16 for CITES engagement.*
- g. Notes that the SC Chair, with the assistance of the Secretariat, should prepare a report of the Standing Committee on its activities related to IPBES for CoP16, as required by Decision 15.14.*
10. The membership of the intersessional working group on IPBES was agreed as Canada, Chile, China, Denmark, Egypt, Ireland, Japan, Mexico (chair), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees, IUCN and WWF.
11. As reflected on the IPBES website hosted by UNEP ([www.ipbes.net/comments.html](http://www.ipbes.net/comments.html)), and in accordance with paragraph 7 c) of the present document, the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees and the Secretariat, as well as other working group members, provided input on specific IPBES intersessional activities with deadlines of 16 August 2012 and 16 September 2012, respectively. The intersessional activities for which CITES provided inputs include:
- Rules of Procedure for meetings of the platform plenary;
  - capacity building needs and activities;
  - receiving and prioritizing requests from Governments;
  - determining a scoping process;
  - procedures for preparation, review, acceptance, approval and publication of assessment reports and deliverables;
  - conflict of interest policy for participants of the platform; and
  - policy and procedures on admission of observers to the plenary.
12. The first session of the Plenary of IPBES (IPBES-1) is scheduled to be held in Bonn, Germany from 21 to 26 January 2013. A provisional agenda is available at [www.ipbes.net/plenary/ipbes-1](http://www.ipbes.net/plenary/ipbes-1). UNEP kindly supported the participation of the Secretariat at the first session of the plenary meeting to determine modalities and institutional arrangements for an IPBES (Nairobi, October 2011) as well as the participation of the Vice-chair of the Animals Committee and the Secretariat at the second session of the plenary meeting (Panama City, April 2012). The Secretariat would like to thank UNEP for such support and hopes that similar support will enable the participation of one of the Chairs of the scientific committees and the Secretariat at IPBES-1.
13. The anticipated presence of the Secretary-General at the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Hyderabad, October 2012), and other relevant meetings, could offer him an opportunity to discuss with the executive heads of other biodiversity-related conventions means for facilitating cooperation in relation to IPBES, including through a possible cooperative Memorandum of Understanding between the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions (BLG) and the IPBES Secretariat.

#### Recommendations

14. As Decision 15.12, Decision 15.13 and Decision 15.14 have now been implemented, and further developments necessitate a recasting of CITES' engagement with IPBES, it is recommended that those decisions be omitted from the new list of Decisions that remains valid after CoP16.
15. It is recommended that the Conference of the Parties welcome the establishment of IPBES and adopt the draft Decisions contained in the Annex to this document.

16. It is also recommended that the Conference of the Parties consider any amendments to the draft Decisions contained in the Annex to this document or any additional draft Decisions, which may be recommended in the oral report of the Chair of the Standing Committee or the Secretariat as a result of the decisions taken at IPBES-1 mentioned in paragraph 10 above.

#### COMMENTS FROM THE SECRETARIAT

- A. The Secretariat recommends that the Conference of the Parties adopt the draft decisions contained in the Annex to the present document.
- B. The Secretariat notes that future participation in IPBES-related meetings is subject to external funds in the amount of approximately USD 10,000 per year, if such meetings are held in Bonn.

DRAFT DECISIONS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

**Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform  
on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)**

***Directed to the Parties***

- 16.xx Parties should consider promoting actions to reinforce linkages between IPBES and CITES and to strengthen the science-policy interface at the national and international levels, including through the governing body of IPBES, as appropriate.

***Directed to the Standing Committee***

- 16.xx The Standing Committee shall establish a Working Group on IPBES, including the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees and the Secretariat, to assist its efforts to ensure that:
- a) There is a two-way relationship between CITES and IPBES in which CITES is a user or beneficiary of IPBES as well as a contributor to IPBES;
  - b) A mechanism is developed for facilitating communication between CITES and IPBES for the conveyance of government requests to IPBES from the Conference of the Parties or the Standing Committee;
  - c) The identification of capacity-building needs and related financing by IPBES helps national scientific and management authorities to foster the use of applied science for the implementation of CITES; and
  - d) A draft Resolution is developed which specifically recognizes the relationship between CITES and IPBES.

The Standing Committee shall report at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the results of this work.

***Directed to the Animals and Plants Committees***

- 16.xx The Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees shall:
- a) assist the Standing Committee with the implementation of Decision 16.xx;
  - a) subject to external funds, participate as observers in the IPBES Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and thereby reinforce linkages between the MEP and the CITES scientific committees;
  - b) report regularly to the Standing Committee on their activities under paragraph a) above; and
  - c) continue their cooperation with the Chairs of the Scientific Advisory Bodies of Biodiversity-related Conventions and the secretariats of the conventions, in relation to IPBES.

***Directed to the Secretariat***

- 16.xx The Secretariat shall:
- a) subject to external funds, participate as an observer in the governing body of IPBES and thereby reinforce linkages between that body and the governing bodies of CITES;
  - b) explore with other biodiversity-related conventions the possible development of a cooperative Memorandum of Understanding between the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions (BLG) and the IPBES Secretariat;

- c) request funding from UNEP to support attendance at IPBES meetings by the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees and the Secretariat;
- d) continue its cooperation with the Chairs of the Scientific Advisory Bodies of Biodiversity-related Conventions and the secretariats of the conventions, in relation to IPBES; and
- e) report regularly to the Standing Committee on the results of this work.