

Additional guidance for nominated and selected fellows

Introduction

Following the IPBES 3 Plenary decision (IPBES-3/1), IPBES is implementing a pilot fellowship programme on assessments.

As part of this capacity building pilot programme, IPBES is able to offer 32 *pro bono* fellowships (see point 6 below) to enable young scientists to take part in the work of IPBES. The current call applies to the four regional and sub-regional assessments (Africa, Americas, Asia-Pacific and Europe and Central Asia) and to the thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration, which will begin in 2015.

The IPBES young fellows pilot programme provides an exciting opportunity for individuals in the early stages of their careers in the area of social, economic and biological sciences, policy development and indigenous and local knowledge, related to biodiversity and ecosystem services. The programme is designed to increase the number of early career experts involved as authors in the regional and sub-regional assessments (Africa, Americas, Asia-Pacific and Europe and Central Asia) and in the thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration.

Teams of leading experts from a range of disciplines and from all parts of the world will write the aforementioned assessments; the selected fellows will work and interact as members of these teams. Through their involvement in IPBES, fellows will gain an understanding of a major assessment process, pressing environmental, policy, social and economic issues facing our world, and options for action. Fellows will also have the opportunity to network with a wide range of colleagues, which could be of great value in their future careers.

Modalities of the IPBES young fellows pilot programme

1. Selected fellows will participate in an assessment as contributing authors to the particular chapter for which they are selected.
2. Selected applicants are required to make a commitment of *up to* 15 percent of their time in the assessment period (mid-2015 – end-2017).
3. The time commitment includes author meetings, writing, and then revising their specific chapter contributions in response to comments from other authors and the peer review process.
4. As part of the team of chapter authors, fellows will be expected to work under the overall supervision of the Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors. The work of the fellows may include carrying out a critical assessment of the literature on a specific issue, developing a case study, responding to comments received during the expert and government peer-review process, and, more generally, work as part of the chapter team.
5. Fellows will attend two author meetings (dates below). Prior to the first author meeting, fellows will receive a package of background information.
6. This is an unpaid fellowship scheme. Selected fellows are expected to work *pro bono* with all work provided in fulfilment of the assigned tasks considered as in-kind contribution and is not remunerated. Expenses occurring attending the two author meetings (travel costs and daily subsistence) will be covered for selected fellows from developing countries and countries with economies in transition in accordance with UN rules. Selected fellows from developed countries are expected to cover their own expenses. Fellows from countries not eligible for support are encouraged to seek support from their home institution/organisation or government.

IPBES young fellows pilot programme selection criteria

Candidates should:

1. Be in the early stages of their careers, preferably not older than 35 years of age and not more than 5-10 years after having completed their relevant academic degree. They should work in the area of social, economic and biological sciences, policy development and/or indigenous and local knowledge systems,
2. Be able to make a time commitment of *up to* 15 percent of their time over the assessment period, including attending two one-week author meetings (see below for dates). This commitment is required from fellows personally and officially from their employing institution,
3. Demonstrate a keen interest and willingness to learn more about assessments,
4. Be willing to actively share their experience gained from the assessment process, e.g. within their home institutions,
5. Preferably have excellent speaking, reading and writing skills in English,
6. Have good research and analytical skills in dealing with complex issues, demonstrated ability to deal with material from multiple disciplines and write concisely, accurately reflecting the information in the literature, as well as the ability to meet deadlines,
7. Have demonstrated ability to interact with people from other disciplines and work effectively and efficiently as a team member,
8. Have access to a reliable internet connection in their home institution to allow free access to email and worldwide web resources.

Candidates will be selected based on merit and with a view to achieve disciplinary, geographic and gender balance. In addition to the nominations received through this call, IPBES will also be looking at previous nomination of experts for potential candidates.

32 fellows will be selected (six fellows for each of the four regional assessment and eight fellows for the thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration).

Meeting dates

Fellows will attend two of the three author meetings planned for each assessment (in 2015 and 2016 respectively). Fellows will *not* attend the third meeting (2017). Dates for the author meetings in 2016 and 2017 have not yet been decided; please see the table below for first authors meeting dates in 2015.

| Assessments | Scheduled dates, first authors meeting |
|--|--|
| Thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration | 6-10 July 2015 |
| Regional and sub-regional assessment for the Americas region | 20-24 July 2015 |
| Regional and sub-regional assessment for the Africa region | 3-7 August 2015 |
| Regional and sub-regional assessment for the Asia and the Pacific region | 17-21 August 2015 |
| Regional and sub-regional assessment for Europe and Central Asia | 31 August – 4 September 2015 |

For questions, please do not hesitate to contact the IPBES technical support unit on capacity building:

Ingunn Storro
Senior Adviser, IPBES TSU Capacity Building
ingunn.storro@ipbes.miljodir.no
Phone: +47 73 58 05 00

Annex I

This annex presents the scope, rationale and chapter outline of the planned regional and sub-regional assessments

IPBES Regional and sub-regional assessments on biodiversity and ecosystem services

Scope¹

The overall scope of the regional/sub-regional assessments is to assess the status and trends regarding biodiversity, ecosystem functions and ecosystem services and their interlinkages, the impact of biodiversity, ecosystem functions and ecosystem services and threats to them on good quality of life and the effectiveness of responses, including the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the national biodiversity strategies and action plans developed under the Convention on Biological Diversity.² The assessments will address terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine biodiversity, ecosystem functions and ecosystem services.

The objective of the regional/sub-regional assessment processes is to strengthen the science-policy interface on biodiversity, ecosystem functions and ecosystem services at regional and sub-regional levels. The assessments will analyse the state of knowledge on past, present and future interactions between people and nature, including by highlighting potential tipping points, feedbacks and trade-offs. The timeframe of analyses will cover current status, trends (often going back in time several decades) and future projections, with a focus on periods ranging from 2020 to 2050, which cover key target dates related to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the ongoing process of developing the post-2015 development agenda. The conceptual framework of the Platform will guide these analyses of the social-ecological systems that operate at various scales in time and space.

The regional/sub-regional assessments will address the following policy-relevant questions:

- (a) How do biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services contribute to the economy, livelihoods, food security, and good quality of life in the regions, and what are the interdependences among them?
- (b) What are the status, trends and potential future dynamics of biodiversity, ecosystem functions and ecosystem services that affect the contribution to the economy, livelihoods and well-being in the regions?
- (c) What are the pressures driving the change in the status and trends of biodiversity, ecosystem functions, ecosystem services and good quality of life in the regions?
- (d) What are the actual and potential impacts of various policies and interventions on the contribution of biodiversity, ecosystem functions and ecosystem services to the sustainability of the economy, livelihoods, food security and good quality of life in the regions?
- (e) What gaps in knowledge need to be addressed in order to better understand and assess drivers, impacts and responses of biodiversity, ecosystem functions and services at the regional level?

Additional specificities are presented in the complementary scoping reports of each region/sub-region.

¹ IPBES/3/18

² As expressed in deliverable 2 (b) of the work programme of the Platform (decision IPBES-2/5, annex I).

Rationale

Biodiversity, ecosystem functions and ecosystem services provide the basis for the economies, livelihoods and good quality of life of people throughout the world. The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets provide an overarching framework for effective and urgent action to halt the loss of biodiversity in order to ensure that by 2020 ecosystems are resilient and continue to provide essential services, thereby securing the planet's variety of life, and contributing to human well-being and poverty eradication. These considerations are also included in the ongoing development of the post-2015 development agenda and its possible sustainable development goals. Regional and/or national biodiversity strategies and action plans are important vehicles for implementing the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and adapting them to regional and national conditions. All these efforts require a strong knowledge base and strengthened interplay between scientists and policymakers and different knowledge systems, to which the regional/sub-regional assessments are well placed to contribute.

The assessments will themselves be a vehicle for implementation of the Platform's functions as they relate to capacity-building, identification of knowledge gaps, knowledge generation and development of policy support tools. Furthermore, such assessments are critical to furthering the Platform's operational principle of ensuring the full use of national, sub-regional and regional knowledge, as appropriate, including a bottom-up approach.

Additional specificities are presented in the complementary scoping reports of each region/sub-region.

Chapter outline

Chapter 1: Setting the scene

Chapter 2: Nature's benefits to people and quality of life

Chapter 3: Status, trends and future dynamics of biodiversity and ecosystems underpinning nature's benefits to people

Chapter 4: Direct and indirect drivers of change in the context of different perspectives of quality of life

Chapter 5: Integrated and cross-scale analysis of interactions of the natural world and human society

Chapter 6: Options for governance, institutional arrangements and private and public decision-making across scales and sectors.

Additional specificities are presented in the complementary scoping reports of each region/sub-region.

For more information about the IPBES regional and sub-regional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services see document IPBES/3/18 <http://ipbes.net/plenary/ipbes-3.html>

Annex II

This annex presents the scope, rationale and chapter outline of the planned thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration

IPBES thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration

Scope³

For the purposes of this thematic assessment, “degraded land” is defined as the state of land which results from the persistent decline or loss in biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services that cannot fully recover unaided within decadal time scales. “Land degradation”, in turn, refers to the many processes that drive the decline or loss in biodiversity, ecosystem functions or services, and includes the degradation of all terrestrial ecosystems. The assessment will also include associated aquatic ecosystems that are impacted by land degradation. “Restoration” is defined as any intentional activity that initiates or accelerates the recovery of an ecosystem from a degraded state. The term “rehabilitation” is used to refer to restoration activities that may fall short of fully restoring the biotic community to its pre-degradation state, including natural regeneration and emergent ecosystems.

The assessment will seek to involve all relevant stakeholders from its inception. The structure of the assessment is based on the conceptual framework adopted by the Plenary of the Platform in its decision IPBES-2/4.

Rationale

Land degradation, which is primarily a direct or indirect result of human activities, is a major problem on every continent except Antarctica. The total human cost of land degradation is not known, but the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) estimates the economic impact at more than \$40 billion annually. Building on the work of the Rio conventions (the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity), and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), the goals of halting and reversing land degradation and decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation have been proposed as part of the sustainable development goals. These goals include Convention on Biological Diversity Aichi Targets 5, 7, 14 and 15 and the ongoing process for developing a post-2015 development agenda. In 2011, in recognition of the benefits to people of restoring degraded land, world leaders endorsed the “Bonn Challenge”, a global effort to restore 150 million hectares of deforested and degraded land by 2020. As a first step towards meeting that goal, there is a clear need to assess the extent, causes and processes of land degradation and the consequences for biodiversity and people, as well as evaluating responses to the restoration and rehabilitation of degraded land and the avoidance of future degradation and the benefits that this will deliver to people.

Chapter Outline

Chapter 1: Benefits to people from avoidance of land degradation and restoration of degraded land.

Chapter 2: Concepts and perceptions of land degradation and restoration.

Chapter 3: Direct and indirect drivers of land degradation and restoration.

Chapter 4: Status and trends of land degradation and restoration and associated changes in biodiversity and ecosystem functions.

³ IPBES/3/18

Chapter 5: Land degradation and restoration associated with changes in ecosystem services and functions, and human well-being and good quality of life.

Chapter 6: Responses to avoid land degradation and restore degraded land

Chapter 7: Scenarios of land degradation and restoration.

Chapter 8: Decision support to address land degradation and support restoration of degraded land.

For more information about the IPBES thematic assessment of land degradation and restoration see IPBES/3/18 on <http://ipbes.net/plenary/ipbes-3.html>