

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



Sixty-second meeting of the Standing Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 23-27 July 2012

Strategic matters

Cooperation with other organizations

INTERGOVERNMENTAL SCIENCE-POLICY PLATFORM  
ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEMS SERVICES

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 15th meeting (Doha, 2010), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 15.12 as follows:

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

*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.*

3. Further to this Decision, the interim Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees attended the *third ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting on an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services (IPBS)* held in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 7 to 12 June 2010. This participation was funded by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Spain, respectively.
4. The report and the recommendations of this meeting, which can be found in the Annex to document AC25 Doc. 7.2, were welcomed at the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Nagoya, October 2010), where the CBD Parties adopted a decision encouraging the United Nations General Assembly at its 65th session to consider the establishment of the intergovernmental science-policy platform at the earliest opportunity.
5. On 20 December 2010, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution which requested UNEP, without prejudice to the final institutional arrangements for IPBES and in consultation with all relevant organizations and bodies, to convene a plenary meeting of IPBES to determine its modalities and institutional arrangements, in order to fully operationalize it.
6. At its 26th Session (Nairobi, February 2011), the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum agreed *inter alia* to request the Executive Director of UNEP, in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to convene a first plenary meeting of IPBES in 2011 and to continue to facilitate any ensuing process to implement the platform until such time as a secretariat is established.
7. At its 25th meeting (Geneva, July 2011), the Animals Committee, in the presence of the Chair of the Plants Committee, adopted conclusions about CITES's engagement with IPBES. These were subsequently endorsed by the Standing Committee at its 61st meeting (Geneva, August 2011) and can be found in paragraph 5 of the Annex to document SC61 Doc. 15.6 (Rev. 1). The conclusions were subsequently conveyed to the first plenary meeting of IPBES in an information document.

8. The first session of the plenary meeting to determine modalities and institutional arrangements for an IPBES was convened in Nairobi, Kenya, from 3 to 7 October 2011. The CITES Secretariat attended this meeting as well as a Stakeholder Day organized by UNEP on 2 October 2011. At the plenary meeting, a joint statement was issued by the Secretariats and Chairs of scientific advisory bodies of CITES, CBD, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources in Food and Agriculture, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and the World Heritage Convention. They noted therein the importance of IPBES to the work of the conventions as well as the potential contributions of the conventions to the work of IPBES. The CITES Secretariat is grateful for the assistance and support it received from the Vice-Chair of the Plants Committee, Mr Hesiquio Benítez Díaz, who attended the meeting as a representative of Mexico.
9. In preparation for the second session of the plenary meeting, which was held in Panama City, Panama, from 16 to 21 April 2012, the Animals and Plants Committees and in the presence of the Chair of the Standing Committee, adopted the following statement:
  - a) The second meeting of the plenary for IPBES (Panama City, April 2012) should clarify the means by which [CITES] is to participate in IPBES. For example, [CITES]\* could have a special status in IPBES, perhaps as participating organizations similar to those recognized in the IPCC.
  - b) There should be a two-way relationship between [CITES] and IPBES in which the [Convention] is both a user or beneficiary of IPBES as well as a contributor to IPBES.
  - c) A mechanism should be developed for facilitating communication between [CITES] and IPBES (e.g. for the conveyance of government requests to IPBES from the Conference of the Parties).
  - d) Cooperation among the secretariats of the biodiversity-related conventions in relation to IPBES could be facilitated through a cooperative Memorandum of Understanding between the Biodiversity Liaison Group and the IPBES Secretariat.
  - e) [CITES] already has a great deal of information, knowledge and experience – as well as existing databases – to contribute to IPBES (e.g. regarding the sustainable use of listed species in international trade and the ecosystem services that these species provide) and additional information, knowledge and experience will be generated and shared in the future. In this connection, [CITES] can contribute to each of the four key functions identified in the work programme for IPBES (assessment, knowledge generation, policy support tools and methodologies, and capacity building).
  - f) The identification of capacity-building needs and related financing by IPBES offers an opportunity to ensure that capacity building is linked wherever possible to the enhanced use of applied science for the implementation of [CITES].
  - g) Every effort should be made to enhance effective cooperation between [CITES] and IPBES and to avoid duplication.
  - h) Collaboration between [CITES] and IPBES should occur at the global, regional and national levels.
10. The Animals and Plants Committees also agreed that if, following the second meeting of the plenary for IPBES, there were any need for the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees and the Secretariat to participate in IPBES-related meetings before CoP16, this should be addressed in the present document which should also propose terms of reference for the Chairs and Secretariat to guide their engagement with IPBES prior to CoP16.
11. The statement contained in paragraph 9 of the present document was presented and used at the fifth meeting of the Chairs of Scientific Advisory Bodies of Biodiversity-related Conventions (CSAB), hosted by CITES in Dublin, Ireland, on 25 March 2012. The CSAB developed a joint statement which was submitted as an information document to the second session of the IPBES plenary meeting (see document UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/INF/16, available at [www.ipbes.net](http://www.ipbes.net)).

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\* CITES is placed in square brackets as these recommendations could also apply to all the biodiversity-related Conventions

12. The Vice-chair of the Animals Committee and the Secretariat represented CITES at the Panama meeting. The final report of the meeting is contained in document UNEP/IPBES.MI/2/9 (available at [www.ipbes.net](http://www.ipbes.net)) and key outcomes included the following:
- a) a resolution establishing IPBES as an independent intergovernmental body\*;
  - b) a set of functions, operating principles and arrangements for the Platform, including the establishment of two subsidiary bodies of the IPBES Plenary (i.e. a Bureau comprising the Chair and four Vice-Chairs, and five additional officers that will oversee administrative functions and a Multidisciplinary Expert Panel, whose interim membership will be based on equal representation of five participants from each of the five UN regions, who will carry out scientific and technical functions);
  - c) inclusion of the chairs of the scientific subsidiary bodies of the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) related to biodiversity and ecosystem services and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change as observers to the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel;
  - d) location of the seat of the secretariat of the Platform in Bonn, Germany;
  - e) certain Rules of Procedure for the Plenary of the Platform; and
  - f) intersessional work to prepare for the first session of the Platform's Plenary (including a compilation by the secretariat of capacity-building needs identified in the national reports submitted to biodiversity and ecosystem services-related MEAs and the submission of views from MEAs on how to submit requests to the Plenary, and on how the Plenary might prioritize such requests).
13. The first session of the Plenary of the Platform will decide on the link between the Platform and the United Nations system. In the interim, the UNEP Secretariat has been requested to facilitate the Platform until the secretariat of the Platform is established, with a view to its being administered by one or more of the following: UNEP, UNESCO, FAO and the UNDP.
14. Representatives of the biodiversity-related conventions met on a regular basis in the margins of the Panama meeting, referred to each other during individual interventions and agreed on a joint statement to be delivered towards the end of the meeting by the Executive Secretary of the Ramsar Convention. Owing to the extended nature of the negotiations, however, there was insufficient time for final statements by participating States and observers to be presented. The joint statement of the biodiversity-related conventions was therefore submitted to UNEP for inclusion in the meeting documentation (see the Annex).

#### Recommendation

15. The Standing Committee is invited to take note of this document and to consider possible guidance it may wish to provide to the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees and the Secretariat regarding future work related to IPBES.

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\* *The resolution and any future decisions of the Platform have a legally non-binding nature.*

Statement by the biodiversity-related conventions, namely the:

Convention on Biological Diversity;

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora;

Convention on Migratory Species;

International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources;

Ramsar Convention on Wetlands; and

World Heritage Convention

Ladies and Gentleman,

The biodiversity-related conventions welcome the establishment of the IPBES and we look forward to its work getting underway as soon as possible.

We believe that the Platform has a major potential to contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of global biodiversity and to the implementation of the conventions, in particular by supporting countries in the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 through the provision of information, analysis, policy-relevant scenarios and related capacity-building to assist countries and the international community in identifying the policies and actions needed to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

A bottom-up approach starting at the regional or sub-regional level could not only provide the building blocks for a comprehensive global assessment, but also engage directly with national decision-makers, contributing to capacity building and to the development and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

We welcome the recognition given at this meeting to the role of the conventions in setting the biodiversity agenda and as a source of scientific knowledge and advice. We welcome also that consideration has been given to how our conventions can participate in the multi-disciplinary expert panel.

The Secretariats of the biodiversity-related conventions, and the Chairs of their scientific bodies, stand willing to contribute to the work of both the executive committee and the multi-disciplinary expert panel, in a manner that is appropriate to the format and functions of the Platform and responsive to the needs of our conventions.

The Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-related Conventions (which brings together the executive heads of all global biodiversity-related conventions) stands willing to explore mechanisms to ensure good communication and collaboration with the IPBES Secretariat.

The biodiversity-related conventions stand ready to contribute to the inter-sessional process, including: by providing information on our ongoing assessment-related work; and contributing to the development of a conceptual framework for assessments.

As the modalities of the Platform are under further development, of particular importance to the biodiversity-related conventions will be the consideration of requests from our Conventions. We note the Busan Outcome envisages that IPBES will be responsive to government requests that are conveyed through the governing bodies of the biodiversity-related conventions.

Therefore, similar to the practice in IPCC, the Platform might consider giving priority to requests from the conventions as it puts in place the process to receive, screen and scope and respond to requests.

Capacity building is an important activity for the conventions and, accordingly, we look forward to contributing to the development of mechanisms to promote it, especially at the sub-global level.

Over the coming months, the governing bodies of several biodiversity-related conventions will be meeting and reflecting on the outcomes of this plenary meeting and the substantive contributions they can provide to the newly established IPBES. We look forward to sharing the results of those deliberations with the IPBES and its Secretariat.

We are committed to working closely together to strengthen the science-policy interface on biodiversity and ecosystem services.