

53rd Meeting of the Standing Committee

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**COOPERATION BETWEEN THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL SCIENCE-POLICY PLATFORM ON
BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES (IPBES) AND CMS**

(Prepared by the Secretariat)

Summary:

This document summarizes activities undertaken by the Secretariat and the Scientific Council concerning cooperation with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), with particular reference to Decisions 13.12 and 13.13.

The Standing Committee is invited to take note of the document, and provide any guidance to the Secretariat as regards further engagement with IPBES and promotion of the inclusion of an assessment on connectivity in the IPBES rolling work programme.

COOPERATION BETWEEN THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL SCIENCE-POLICY PLATFORM ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES (IPBES) AND CMS

Background

1. The Conference of the Parties at its 13th meeting (COP13, Ghandinagar, 2020) reaffirmed the importance of strengthening cooperation between the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and CMS through the adoption of CMS Resolution 10.8 (Rev.COP13) *Cooperation between the Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and CMS*, which, *inter alia*, instructs the Secretariat to maintain cooperative working relationships with IPBES and to participate in its meetings as appropriate.
2. CMS Decision 13.12-13 *Cooperation between the Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and CMS*, COP13 further specifies the mandates to the Scientific Council and the Secretariat to engage in relevant IPBES processes:

13.12 Directed to the Scientific Council

The Scientific Council is requested, subject to the availability of resources, to engage in relevant scoping processes and review of drafts of the IPBES thematic assessments adopted by IPBES-7 Plenary with a view to ensure that elements of connectivity are integrated.

13.13 Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat is requested to: a) support the Scientific Council in engaging in relevant scoping processes of the new IPBES thematic assessments adopted by IPBES-7 Plenary; b) promote the inclusion of an assessment on connectivity in the IPBES rolling work programme by IPBES-9 Plenary in 2022; c) report to the Standing Committee at its 52nd meeting and to the Conference of the Parties at its 14th meeting on the progress in implementing this decision.

Engagement of the Scientific Council and the Secretariat in relevant IPBES processes including thematic assessments

3. The Secretariat has been supporting engagement of members of the Scientific Council in the external review of drafts of relevant thematic and methodological assessments and other IPBES deliverables by regularly monitoring the IPBES calendar and bringing opportunities to provide input to the attention of the members of the Scientific Council. The Secretariat has also endeavoured to promote the participation of experts from the CMS constituency in working groups established for the scoping and drafting of assessments of particular interest to CMS, though these efforts have not been successful so far.
4. The chair of the CMS Scientific Council is a permanent observer of the IPBES Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP), and is invited to all its meetings. When the chair cannot attend, the Secretariat is accepted as a substitute. Since COP13, three meetings of the MEP have taken place: the first one was attended by the Secretariat, as the chair had not yet been elected at that time; the second and third were attended by the chair. The main input solicited from observers are reports on the consideration of IPBES deliverables by the respective organization.
5. The Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council at its 5th meeting (ScC-SC5, online, 28 June – 9 July 2021) reviewed its cooperation with IPBES, and agreed to continue its engagement with IPBES on a similar level as in recent years (see document [ScC-SC5/Doc.4.1](#) and the [Report of the Meeting](#) for details).

6. With specific reference to the mandate of Dec. 13.12 and Dec. 13.13 a), the CMS COP-appointed Councillor on Connectivity and staff members of the Secretariat have contributed to the scoping processes of the *Thematic assessment of the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food and health* (Nexus assessment) and of the *Thematic assessment of the underlying causes of biodiversity loss, determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 vision for biodiversity* (Transformative change assessment), by actively participating in online conferences aimed at seeking input for the scoping processes, and by participating in the external review of the draft scoping reports for the two assessments. The Secretariat also submitted a proposal for the CMS COP-appointed Councillor on Connectivity to be part of the working group tasked with the drafting of the scoping report of the Nexus assessment, but he was not selected to be a member of the working group.
7. The scoping reports for the Nexus assessment and the Transformative change assessment were finalized and adopted by the IPBES Plenary at its 8th session (June 2021). The first author meetings of both assessments took place in May 2022. The first external review of the chapters for both assessments is planned for early 2023.
8. The Secretariat participated in both external reviews of the Assessment Report on the Sustainable Use of Wild Species, providing written comments to the drafts submitted for review. The summary for policy makers (SPM) of the assessment was finalized and approved by the IPBES-9 Plenary. The Secretariat drew the attention of Parties and stakeholders on the finalization of the assessment and some elements of it of relevance to CMS through a [news release](#) published on the CMS website. An evaluation of the relevance of the full assessment to CMS is being undertaken by the Secretariat at the time of writing. The uptake of comments provided by CMS seems to be limited. IPBES-9 also finalized and approved the SPM for an Assessment Report on the Diverse Values and Valuation of Nature, also being evaluated for relevance to CMS by the Secretariat.

Promotion of the inclusion of an assessment on connectivity in the IPBES rolling work programme by IPBES-9 Plenary in 2022

9. The IPBES Plenary at its 7th session in 2019 (IPBES-7) received several requests, inputs and suggestions for an assessment on the theme of connectivity. A request for an assessment on connectivity conservation was jointly submitted by CMS and its Agreements and the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (WHC). A complementary proposal was submitted by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).
10. In prioritizing the requests received for new assessments as part of the second rolling programme of work, IPBES-7 decided to defer consideration of the assessment on connectivity to IPBES-9 (Decision 7.1 paragraph 8) which was held on 3-9 July 2022.
11. The IPBES-9 pre-session document concerning additional elements of the rolling work programme of the Platform up to 2030 proposed that the Plenary consider postponing its consideration of the assessment to its tenth session (IPBES-10), together with the request for a second global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services and any further requests, inputs and suggestions which may be received by then (IPBES/9/12 *Requests, input and suggestions for additional elements of the rolling work programme of the Platform up to 2030*).
12. Through Notification 2022/009 *IPBES-9: Assessment on Connectivity* the Secretariat provided information to CMS Parties and stakeholders on the upcoming IPBES-9 meeting. The notification encouraged CMS focal points to liaise with their IPBES counterparts to ensure that appropriate consideration was given by IPBES-9 to the need for timely development of an assessment on connectivity. It also included additional elements related to a thematic assessment on connectivity complementing those included in document IPBES/9/12, and a

proposal for alternative action for consideration by IPBES-9, i.e. to conduct the assessment on connectivity as a fast-track assessment with only one review period and be based on an initial scoping report prepared by the MEP. The full text of the notification can be found [here](#).

13. The CMS Secretariat, jointly with the UNCCD Secretariat and World Heritage Centre, submitted a document for IPBES-9 consideration, aimed at complementing the information included in document IPBES/9/12. The document was included in IPBES-9 documentation as information document [IPBES/9/INF/27](#).
14. In the margins of IPBES-9, the Secretariat, jointly with the UNCCD Secretariat and with the participation of UNEP-WCMC, the IUCN Connectivity Conservation Specialist Group and WWF International, organized and hosted at its premises an informal event aimed at promoting the proposal for an assessment on connectivity with interested IPBES members and stakeholders.
15. At IPBES-9, under the relevant agenda item (Item 10 “*Requests, input and suggestions for additional elements of the rolling work programme of the Platform up to 2030*”), the CMS Executive Secretary delivered a joint statement on behalf of the Secretariats of CMS and UNCCD, and the World Heritage Centre on an assessment on connectivity, in support of having it included by IPBES-9 in the rolling work programme. During the discussion of the item, many IPBES members expressed support for an assessment on connectivity, while others expressed the view that no decision should be taken until IPBES-10, when such an assessment could be considered along with other priorities.
16. Following further negotiations, it was agreed that an initial scoping would be undertaken for an assessment on ecological connectivity prior to IPBES-10. The relevant part of *Decision IPBES-9/1: Implementation of the rolling work programme of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services up to 2030*, is copied below:
 9. *Requests* the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau to prepare an initial scoping to form the basis of a fast-track assessment on ecological connectivity, with input from relevant multilateral environmental agreements and other organizations, taking into account the draft elements related to a thematic assessment of connectivity outlined in document IPBES/9/12, annex III, as well as the outcomes of the resumed fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, for consideration by the Plenary at its tenth session;
17. The 19th meetings of the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP) of IPBES, that will be held from 27 to 29 September 2022 in Bonn, Germany are expected to consider the preparation of the initial scoping for the fast-track assessment on ecological connectivity as per Decision IPBES-9/1. The Secretariat is exploring how the chair of the CMS Scientific Council and the Secretariat may contribute to this discussion.

Recommended actions

18. The Standing Committee is recommended to:
 - a) Take note of this report;
 - b) Provide any guidance to the Secretariat as regards further engagement with IPBES and promotion of the inclusion of an assessment on connectivity in the IPBES rolling work programme.