ONet Initiative on
Membership Mapping and Expansion

Title of Initiative	Membership Mapping and Expansion
Lead[1]	Michael Ruggeri
Start of Initiative[2]	On 01.05.2025
Submission of 1st Progress report[3]	By 30.06.2025

Summary of Initiative

Rationale

The challenge, opportunity, or gap that this initiative addresses, relevant to ONet's role in engaging stakeholders in IPBES processes. Please be as specific as possible.

ONet is an inclusive network that aims to connect and empower IPBES stakeholders. Consequently, as one of the main stakeholder engagement mechanisms — together with the Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IIFBES) — ONet plays a crucial role in connecting diverse perspectives to IPBES processes. Fulfilling this function requires not only an understanding of members' needs and aspirations but also the identification of strategic approaches to incentivise and facilitate diversity within its membership.

ONet membership has been steadily increasing over the past 10 years through organic growth. However, this growth presents several challenges and criticalities at the time: the membership has not been systematically analysed or strategically expanded; there is no clear overview about who comprises ONet membership; the current database structure presents areas of confusion, also due to inconsistent data provided by users; there are gaps in representation across stakeholder groups.

A well-organised database and representative membership enables ONet to better fulfill its role in gathering views from diverse stakeholders, ultimately enriching IPBES-related discussions with perspectives that may have been underrepresented. This is particularly important in light of some of the findings from the 2019 external review of IPBES, which noted that "instead of emphasising the diversity of opinions that multiple stakeholders may bring to the process, it appears the focus has been on creating consensus positions, which do not necessarily represent the diversity of perspectives" (see https://www.ipbes.net/resource-file/24663).

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[1] If an initiative has co-leads, their tasks must be clearly assigned in the concept note.
[2] Initiatives start on the first of a month to support subsequent reporting. They may be backdated.
[3] The 1st progress report needs to be submitted by the end of the 2nd month of the initiative. Exceptions might be agreed on.

Vision

What success looks like: the intended impact or outcome for stakeholders and/or IPBES.

The membership is extended to comprise diverse groups of stakeholders with an interest in IPBES work or that IPBES is oriented towards. Different stakeholders see in ONet a potential way to engage with IPBES and are aware of engagement processes.
Success will require: i) a comprehensive overview of current membership and existing gaps; ii) an established process to map and expand membership that can serve different purposes (e.g., targeted communication) supported by different tools that can, among others, facilitate the processing, storing and retrieval of the needed information; iii) the consolidation of a database able to provide an overview of ONet membership diversity at any given point in time; iv) structured processes for members to understand how to engage and interact with and within ONet.

Expected Outputs

Tangible deliverables (e.g., reports, events, tools, outreach materials).

i) A revised database structure with clear and univocal fields that can also serve different purposes (e.g. targeted communication);
ii) A mapping and gap analysis on ONet membership (through Q3 of 2025), with visualisation of stakeholder representation;
iii) A strategy to engage "underrepresented" groups that have expressed or shown an interest in IPBES activities in the past;
iv) A review of membership after outreach complemented by information about engagement (e.g. event participation) and short feedback from new members to assess outreach effectiveness.

Alignment with ONet Values and IPBES

How this initiative reflects ONet's mission of inclusive stakeholder engagement and supports IPBES's objectives. Please refer to the [IPBES Objectives](#) and [ONet Terms of Reference](#) as appropriate.

This initiative contributes to ONet's mission to engage stakeholders and share knowledge by facilitating other activities / initiatives aimed at deeper engagement.
A solid database and expanded membership will enable, among other things: i) an increase in the diversity of users and providers of information, data and knowledge, enhancing the uptake of IPBES-generated knowledge and informing IPBES processes through ONet, but not exclusively; ii) strengthened support for the IPBES deliverables from different regions, scientific disciplines and social groups; iii) stronger foundations for capacity building and knowledge exchange between stakeholders.
These outcomes contribute to "IPBES Objective 2: Building capacity", through enhanced engagement and facilitated access to expertise among ONet members, and "IPBES Objective 5: Communicating and engaging", through strengthened engagement of stakeholders. The initiative

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will ultimately help ensure IPBES work is and remains relevant to and concurrently informed by its diverse stakeholders.

Activities

Roadmap

Milestones and timeline (initiatives start on the first of a month).

Milestone 1: End of June 2025: Revised database and identification of criticalities, data cleaning and standardisation of fields.
Milestone 2: End of July 2025: Analysis of membership data and identification of relevant gaps.
Milestone 3: End of August 2025: Draft strategy for membership expansion and engagement in coordination with "ONet teaching initiative". This includes the definition of targets for stakeholder outreach.
Milestone 4: Mid-September 2025: Identification of potential stakeholders to approach.
Milestone 5: Mid-October 2025: Outreach initiated for at least 50% of the additional stakeholders identified in Milestone 4, and preferred engagement mechanisms identified.
Milestone 6: End of November 2025: Outreach initiated for 100% of additional stakeholders identified in Milestone 4 and preferred engagement mechanisms identified.
Milestone 7: End of December 2025: Short report on updated membership and stakeholder profiling.

Resources and Collaboration

Specific resources from ONet or external partners in support of this initiative. This includes collaborations with other ONet initiatives. Examples include technical advice, tools, promotions or networking.

i) Coordination with ONet facilitators particularly for the revision of member database architecture that can serve various purposes (e.g., tags that can inform the production of tailored communication material such as newsletter items) and the preparation of tailored outreach materials as needed (e.g. PPTs, targeted email communication);
ii) Coordination with "ONet teaching initiative" for what concerns the profiling of membership and the identification of gaps as well as effective engagement mechanisms;
iii) Coordination with "ONet digital transformation initiative" for the identification of potential tools to facilitate stakeholder profiling / mapping or similar; iv) Coordination with "ONet events initiative" to inform stakeholder-tailored events able to better match their interests and aspirations.

☒ I confirm that I lead this initiative and am responsible for its implementation.

☒ I confirm that this initiative has been reviewed by two members of the facilitation team and that I have updated it accordingly.
My two reviewers were Franziska Fischer and Maja Leonie Metzger.

☒ I confirm that I am submitting a progress report by the end of every second month beginning from the start of the initiative to onet.ipbes@gmail.com. If progress reports are not sent on time, steps for escalation and potential archiving apply, per ONet guidelines.

10.05.2025, Michael Ruggeri
Date and name and of the initiative lead[4]

Section to be completed by the ONet facilitator.

This initiative was presented and approved by the ONet facilitation team in the ONet monthly meeting on 21.05.2025.

22.05.2025, Maja Leonie Metzger
Date and name of the assigned ONet facilitator

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[4] Typing the name accounts as signing this document. Initiative leads can additionally express the interest to add their signature on the PDF via e-mail to onet.ipbes@gmail.com.