

Closing Statement from the Open-ended Network of IPBES Stakeholders

24/03/2018 – Closing session of IPBES-6

Thank you chair for giving us the floor,

This is Jonas Geschke from the Network-Forum for Biodiversity Research Germany (NeFo) speaking on behalf of the Open-ended Network of IPBES Stakeholders (ONet).

We would like to:

THANK the government of Colombia for its hospitality, and the Secretariat, Bureau, MEP and delegates for their hard work this past week.

WELCOME the adoption of the four regional assessments and the thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration.

THANK all authors for their contribution to the five assessments. We EXPRESS our sincere congratulations to the authors for their efforts and for the approval of the assessments. We URGE the governments and the Secretariat to consider ways of better recognizing all authors of the assessments, including contributing authors.

WELCOME the decision of the plenary to start the thematic assessment on the sustainable use of wild species and the methodological assessment regarding the diverse conceptualization of multiple values of nature and its benefits.

WELCOME the recommendation of the plenary to step up the work on catalyzing new knowledge and data, and in this regard RECOGNIZE the positive opportunities for IPBES to influence priorities on filling knowledge and data gaps. This includes capacity building for establishing observation systems and mobilizing currently inaccessible data, especially for regions and taxonomic groups where data scarcity is a barrier to confidence in assessments. Further, we ENCOURAGE that future assessments as explicitly as possible gather, emphasise and communicate knowledge gaps, so that they can be addressed efficiently.

Given the clear challenges in achieving a balance of expertise across subregions, disciplines and knowledge systems in the assessments and all tasks of IPBES, governments should consider whether the current 80-20-rule for the selection of experts is serving the objectives of the platform. We URGE the plenary to consider raising this percentage, especially in light of the substantial and critical contributions of experts nominated by stakeholders. In addition, we ASK the Capacity Building TSU to explore ways to support National Focal Points in identifying suitable experts from different knowledge systems to broaden the expert base of IPBES.

In this regard, we SUPPORT the IIFBES in welcoming an open, inclusive and flexible process for achieving the IPBES goal of having all knowledge systems properly represented.

STRESS that governments and the Secretariat consider ways to be more transparent in their selection of experts and ASK for more timely publication of the review comments prior to plenary. We ENCOURAGE the Secretariat to explore ways of being more inclusive in seeking comments on the assessment drafts from stakeholders, for example learning from the Pan-European Stakeholder Consultation process.

WELCOME the upcoming consultations on the strategic framework of the second work program and we will encourage the widest possible response from stakeholders.

LOOK FORWARD to contributing to the upcoming external review of the platform, especially in its examination of the working of the stakeholder engagement strategy.

Thank you chair