
16 March 2020

To: Mona Juul
President of ECOSOC
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Subject: Input to the 2020 United Nations High Level Political Forum (HLPF) and Economic and Social Council by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

Excellency,

It is my great honor to submit to the United Nations High Level Political Forum (HLPF) the Summary for Policymakers of the Global Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), approved at the 7th session of the IPBES Plenary, held 29 April – 4 May in Paris, as an input to the HLPF’s discussion on “Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”.

The Global Assessment found that nature is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history — and the rate of species extinctions is accelerating, with grave impacts on people around the world now likely. The former Chair of IPBES, Sir Robert Watson, had pointed out that “the overwhelming evidence of the IPBES Global Assessment, from a wide range of different fields of knowledge, presents an ominous picture: The health of ecosystems on which we and all other species depend is deteriorating more rapidly than ever. We are eroding the very foundations of our economies, livelihoods, food security, health and quality of life worldwide. The Report also tells us that it is not too late to make a difference, but only if we start now at every level from local to global. Through ‘transformative change’, nature can still be conserved, restored and used sustainably – this is also key to meeting most other global goals. By transformative change, we mean a fundamental, system-wide reorganization across technological, economic and social factors, including paradigms, goals and values.”

The Report presents a wide range of illustrative actions for sustainability and pathways for achieving them across and between sectors such as agriculture, forestry, marine systems, freshwater systems, urban areas, energy, finance and many others. It highlights the importance of, among others, adopting integrated management and cross-sectoral approaches that take into account the trade-offs of food and energy production, infrastructure, freshwater and coastal

management, and biodiversity conservation. Also identified as a key element of more sustainable future policies is the evolution of global financial and economic systems to build a global sustainable economy, steering away from the current limited paradigm of economic growth.

The list of approaches for sustainability and possible actions and pathways for achieving them is set out on pages 44-47 of the English version of the report, available here:

https://ipbes.net/sites/default/files/2020-02/ipbes_global_assessment_report_summary_for_policymakers_en.pdf

The Summary for Policymakers of the Global Assessment in the five other UN languages can be accessed at the following links:

- Arabic: https://ipbes.net/sites/default/files/2020-02/ipbes_global_assessment_report_summary_for_policymakers_ar.pdf (list of possible actions pages 44-47);
- Spanish: https://ipbes.net/sites/default/files/2020-02/ipbes_global_assessment_report_summary_for_policymakers_es.pdf (list of possible actions pages 45-48);
- French: https://ipbes.net/sites/default/files/2020-02/ipbes_global_assessment_report_summary_for_policymakers_fr.pdf (list of possible actions pages 45-48);
- Russian: https://ipbes.net/sites/default/files/2020-02/ipbes_global_assessment_report_summary_for_policymakers_ru.pdf (list of possible actions pages 45-48);
- Chinese: https://ipbes.net/sites/default/files/2020-02/ipbes_global_assessment_report_summary_for_policymakers_zh.pdf (list of possible actions pages 44-47).

Since our submission of the Global Assessment in August 2019 to the HLPF's review of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 17, 4, 8, 10, 16 and 13, laid-out versions of the Summary for Policymakers have been prepared, as listed above.

I am also pleased to inform you that IPBES is currently working on defining the scope of an assessment of the underlying causes of biodiversity loss, determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 vision for biodiversity, which would be aimed at understanding and identifying factors in human society at both the individual and collective levels, including behavioural, social, cultural, economic, institutional, technical and technological dimensions, that may be leveraged to bring about transformative change for the conservation, restoration and wise use of biodiversity, while taking into account broader social and economic goals in the context of sustainable development.

Yours sincerely,



Anne Larigauderie
Executive Secretary
Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
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