



IPBES Capacity Building Workshop

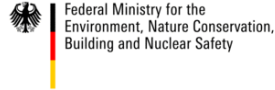
Chisinau, 15.-19. October 2018



IPBES capacity building workshop

Chisinau, Moldova, October 15th - 19th, 2018

Report



The Institute for Biodiversity Network e.V. (ibn) was entrusted by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) through funds of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety to hold a two-day capacity building workshop in Eastern Europe on the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). This workshop took place in Chisinau, Moldova, from October 15th to 19th, 2018. The 22 participants came from Armenia, Bulgaria, Belarus, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine and represented government institutions, scientific institutions and civil society organisations. The Norwegian Environmental Agency gave financial support to enable a third workshop day with specific emphasis on the uptake of the Regional Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for Europe and Central Asia (ECA-Assessment). Throughout all three working days simultaneous translation between English and Russian was provided by professional interpreters.

The main goal of the workshop was to inform especially newcomers to IPBES on how the intergovernmental platform works, what the work programme includes, what the main products are so far and what options there are for active participation, for individuals as well as for organisations or even states. Accordingly, the introductory presentation (by Axel Paulsch, ibn) elaborated on these aspects. The IPBES National Focal Point from Moldova, Ala Rotaru, then informed about the specific situation of Moldova and other Eastern Europe countries in IPBES.

A session on stakeholder engagement, led by Malte Timppte (ibn), informed about the stakeholder engagement strategy of IPBES and asked participants to locate themselves and their institutions as contributors to IPBES, users of IPBES products or supporters of IPBES, in one of the four sectors academia, public, private or civil society. The second part of this session asked all participants to identify further possible stakeholders for their respective countries and also locate them in the same scheme. The results revealed that there is a broad potential stakeholder basis in all countries although many of the named organisations or institutions do not yet participate in IPBES or use the products.

A second presentation by Axel Paulsch introduced IPBES products which are already available, currently prepared or to be started in the near future. The global assessment on Pollination, Pollinators and Food production was presented in detail, including the uptake through the CBD and the formation of a Coalition of the Willing as a political response to the assessment.

In the last session of the first workshop day Malte Timppte introduced national biodiversity platforms as opportunities to stimulate stakeholder and knowledge holder engagement, e.g. the Network-Forum in Germany and similar approaches in other European countries like Belgium, Switzerland or Sweden, international networks like the Europe & Central Asia Network of organisations engaging in IPBES (ECA-network) and the Pan-European Stakeholder Conferences (PESC). The concluding

presentation of the day, kindly provided by Prof. Mark Rounsevell, introduced IPBES work on policy support tools and instruments as well as the latest version of the IPBES Policy Support Tools web-portal.

On the second workshop day several presenters who are already deeply involved in IPBES told about their specific roles in the IPBES context: first, Ruslan Novitsky from Belarus presented his work and tasks as member of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP) for Eastern Europe, then Hanna Sidarovich from Belarus gave insights on her engagement as a fellow for the Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. Finally, Kalina Stoyanova, the IPBES focal point from Bulgaria, described her work and responsibilities as member of the Bulgarian EU-Presidency team during IPBES 6 in Medellin in March 2018.

Diem Hong Thi Tran from the Technical Support Unit for capacity building, based in Trondheim, Norway, introduced the IPBES capacity building rolling plan, ongoing activities and the support that the TSU can offer, including through the fellowship programme for early career scientists.

Axel Paulsch then introduced the key messages of the IPBES Assessment on Land Degradation and Restoration (LDR) as one new products that have been approved at IPBES 6.

In the afternoon the participants in a group work made themselves familiar with the Summary for Policy Makers (SPM) of the ECA-Assessment as preparation for the third day. The SPM was made available for download and in a few printed copies in English and Russian.

In the morning session of the third day Axel Paulsch introduced the key messages of the ECA-Assessment in a presentation provided by the IPBES secretariat. In a group work participants from the six different countries then discussed along the following guiding questions:

- How can IPBES/the assessments' findings help with your work (as government, as scientific organisation, as NGO)?
- What is needed in your country/your organisation to make better use of IPBES products?
- How can IPBES messages be transformed into action in your country?
- What is needed in your country/your organisation to more actively participate in IPBES?

Each country then presented their findings to the whole group. Among the most frequently mentioned points where the following thoughts:

- Further awareness raising for IPBES and its products is needed for different target groups, including national and local governments, scientific institutions and practitioners.
- To also reach the private sector targeted summaries of the messages should be provided.
- National capacity building workshops would be very useful.
- School and university curricula could add elements informing about IPBES.
- Lack of funding for participation in IPBES activities even for government representatives is a common problem.
- In order to obtain funding one could make also use of already existing mechanisms and organisations which could be used also for IPBES.
- Raising awareness and mainstreaming would probably also help to raise more funds.
- In order to raise awareness success stories should be made available.
- Forming of national platforms like in the ECA-network would be very helpful but that also includes costs.
- The language barrier has to be overcome, including by translating e.g. SPMs into national languages.

- The key messages of IPBES assessments can be used by NGOs to back their political positions and as arguments in debates. NGOs can also be multipliers to reach local people as they have contacts into local structures.
- Countries can make use of the policy tools provided and described by IPBES and don't have to develop them themselves.
- To be really effective the IPBES assessments' key messages have to be transformed into according legislation which then has to be enforced. One instrument to take up the key messages are National Biodiversity and Action Plans under the CBD (all countries that were present are also CBD member states).
- Scientific institutions and NGOs should also have focal points to get in touch with the IPBES secretariat (which is automatically the case if an organisation applies for observer status).

In an final evaluation session the participants were asked to mention what they captured during the workshop, what was only partly understood or what still stayed somewhat unclear.