

# PESC – RESPIN

Joint Meeting

10th–13th March 2025



Residence Palace, Brussels, Belgium

## PESC-RESPIN event report

10–13<sup>th</sup> March 2025 in Brussels

The Pan-European Stakeholder Consultation (PESC 8) for the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) was co-organised by the [ECA Network](#), the [RESPIN project](#), and [Biodiversa+](#). The meeting took place in Brussels, Belgium, during the week of 10 March 2025.

This event brought together stakeholders, including National Focal Points, experts, and organisations working at the science-policy interface on biodiversity and climate change in Europe and Central Asia. It provided opportunities for networking and exchange on key topics related to engagement with IPBES and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Sessions and workshops were held around various topics, such as processes and opportunities for National Focal points and experts, capacity-building and educational materials, policy uptake and interdisciplinary research. Key outcomes included a deeper understanding of IPBES and IPCC processes, the exchange of strategies for contributing to these initiatives, and the sharing of knowledge on the interlinkages between biodiversity and climate change.



Figure 1: PESC-RESPIN event participants at the Residence Palace venue

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## Monday 10th March – Introduction to the event

The event started with some opening remarks by Hilde Eggermont (INBO). She emphasized the importance of bridging the climate and biodiversity communities and fostering synergies between governments and researchers in and beyond Pan-European boundaries. Axel Paulsch (IBN) presented PESC, a network founded a decade ago to connect IPBES national focal points and national biodiversity platforms through knowledge-sharing and networking, marking the first time the PESC meeting was co-organized with an EU-funded program like RESPIN. Nathalie Morata (FRB) discussed EU Horizon projects, such as COOP4CBD and Biodiversa+, which strengthen the science-policy interface, for example by linking the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) with EU initiatives. Yves Zinngrebe (UfZ) introduced the RESPIN project, which aims to strengthen knowledge provision and uptake for IPCC and IPBES, strengthen underrepresented regions, building a network community of national platforms and provide targeted capacity building and digital upscaling. David Gonzalez (IPBES Secretariat) outlined IPBES's different assessments, conceptual framework and its global policy influence, while Geritt Hansen (Senior Advisor IPCC WGI TSU) explained IPCC's history and mandate, structure, the 7<sup>th</sup> AR, ongoing discussions on collaboration with IPBES and upcoming expert meetings.

Next followed an interactive session with the mentimeter, to get to know the participants in the room. The mentimeter showed that the majority of the event participants, were policymakers and science-policy experts, with their main expertise within the biodiversity area (47%), followed by climate change area (26%). Awareness of IPBES and IPCC varied among attendees, with many advocating for joint IPBES and IPCC meetings and shared assessments to enhance collaboration. Motivations for engagement included policy impact, academic visibility, and networking, while capacity-building needs centred on training on how to engage, mandate comprehension, and examples of successful collaboration.

The opening day reinforced the consensus that biodiversity and climate change must be addressed together, highlighting the need for structured cooperation and knowledge exchange between science and policy stakeholders. The day was wrapped up with a cocktail and poster session.

## Tuesday 11th March – Interactive sessions


### Parallel session 1: IPBES processes and opportunities for National Focal Points

Facilitator: Axel Paulsch (IBN)

#### Session 1

David Gonzalez introduced the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and its rolling work program up to 2030, highlighting opportunities for National Focal Points (NFPs) and experts. Diem Hong Tran (IPBES Capacity-building TSU) emphasized the importance of stakeholder engagement and capacity building, particularly through the IPBES Technical Support Unit (TSU) for capacity building. Helena Freitas (NFP Portugal) discussed the impact of IPBES and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) on environmental policies in Portugal, stressing the role of IPBES focal points in integrating biodiversity knowledge into various sectors, including agriculture. A key concern was how IPBES outcomes can shape national policies and support initiatives like citizen science, particularly in helping farmers adopt more sustainable practices, such as reducing pesticide use and promoting alternative farming approaches.





The discussion covered a broad range of perspectives on the relevance of IPBES assessments. A question was raised who the end-users of the IPBES outcomes are, prompting Ana Maria Hernandez Salgar to clarify that these assessments inform government decisions, academic research, local communities, scientific media, and the private sector. Helena Freitas highlighted how IPBES is transforming scientific production by fostering interdisciplinary approaches, leading to greater integration in sectors like health and politics. A participant from Switzerland underscored the importance of translating IPBES knowledge for broader audiences, including schools and financial institutions. Other participants pointed out the necessity of engaging non-biodiversity sectors and identifying knowledge gaps, with the EU funding projects such as pollinator research. Another participant raised concerns about private-sector involvement and financial constraints, to which David Gonzalez replied with insights from the upcoming Business and Biodiversity Assessment, which will examine success factors and gaps in private-sector engagement.

## Session 2 (fishbowl)

The session highlighted the urgent need for enhanced capacity-building structures across Europe and Central Asia, emphasizing the importance of bottom-up approaches to complement traditional top-down strategies. A participant from Romania underscored the challenges posed by Romania's complex governance structure and advocated for directives to support IPBES capacity-building efforts. Another participant from Bulgaria addressed barriers such as frequent government changes and outdated curricula, emphasizing the role of scientific expertise and knowledge-sharing platforms like the Esmeralda and Selina projects. A participant from Belgium showcased the benefits of national platforms in bridging biodiversity research and policy, while a participant from France detailed IPCC's involvement in national IPBES knowledge exchange initiatives in France. A representative from the EU Commission highlighted geopolitical challenges and the necessity for pragmatic biodiversity actions, urging greater European coordination in global biodiversity efforts. The discussion reinforced the need for interdisciplinary collaboration, evidence-based policy, and integration of biodiversity considerations across sectors, with national platforms playing a pivotal role in achieving these goals.


## Parallel session 2: IPBES process and opportunities for Experts

Facilitators: Marie-Claire Danner (FRB), Coline Léandre (FRB)

### Session 1

The session included a detailed discussion on the experiences and engagement of experts involved in IPBES assessments, starting with Marie-Claire's insights into her role as part of the Technical Support Unit (TSU) for the Sustainable Use of Wild Species assessment. She provided a reminder of IPBES functions and the critical role of authors in the assessment process, which typically involves several hundred experts over a three- to four-year period. The process is transparent and rigorous, ensuring high-quality outputs. The 2nd Global Assessment was also introduced, with its scoping approved at IPBES11 and recruitment of authors underway. This assessment will update the literature since 2018, evaluate progress toward global biodiversity goals, and place a stronger focus on oceans, inland waters, social science and the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs). The importance of becoming an author was highlighted through the preliminary results of the RESPIN survey, in which the participants emphasized the significant career benefits, including new collaborations, expanded research opportunities, and transdisciplinary learning. The session also covered different author roles—Co-Chairs, Coordinating Lead Authors (CLA), Lead Authors (LA), Fellows, and Contributing Authors—and stressed the importance of financial support and understanding national pre-selection processes for involvement in the 2GA.

Andra Baldi from the Centre of Ecological Research in Hungary shared his perspective on the costs and benefits of being an IPBES expert, being himself a former member of the MEP, a member of a task force, LA for the regional assessment, and a participant in the plenary sessions. While some researchers may see participation as a potential



loss of productivity, he argued that scientists have a duty to engage with decision-makers to ensure their work has a real-world impact. The discussion also addressed key reasons to get involved, including the opportunity to work across disciplines, meet the needs of policymakers who are looking for precise answers, contribute to global representation in assessments, and identify knowledge gaps that can drive future funding opportunities.

Yves Zinngrebe (UfZ) provided a case study of his experience as a CLA for the transformative change (TC) assessment, reflecting on both the challenges and rewards of the process. He described the heavy workload, recurring deadlines, and difficulties in defining key concepts but also highlighted the honour of working with renowned experts, improving methodological skills, and influencing political agendas. The discussion also acknowledged structural issues, such as unequal financial support for experts, and proposed solutions like better selection criteria, improved decision-making procedures, and more equitable funding to ensure balanced participation.

## **Session 2 (fishbowl)**

### **Some observations that came out of the session:**

- Lack of funding for experts' salaries, time and travel - a major stumbling block to ensuring long-term involvement that is truly balanced and fair. The lack of funding ultimately makes the process less fair.
- Involvement in IPBES depends very much on an expert's individual motivation to get involved in the process. Some experts are forced to cut back on part of their salary and their private life in order to get involved. Researchers are often remunerated per project and are recognised through the publication of articles. They have to defend and justify this to their superiors, which is very complex.
- For countries that have IPBES support for their experts (e.g. Georgia), this does not prevent their involvement from being voluntary and the experts are not paid for the time they spend working for IPBES.
- The new generation of researchers are not prepared to get involved in this type of process for free and on their own time, despite their high level of commitment and expertise.
- Questioning the scientific foundations of IPBES (which are very good) to find out how to include more practitioners. The process needs to integrate more practitioners and more emerging sustainability disciplines, more IPLKs, while integrating them into a common language. Hence the importance of processes and paying attention to the experts we have in the assessment.
- Natural scientists vs. social scientists: there is still a reluctance to collaborate and work together, which also explains why some experts do not want to get involved in an IPBES assessment. Treatment of subjects in silos.
- Today, there are far fewer prospects for advancement as a researcher, despite the number of publications. Researchers have also been taken advantage of by the system, which churns out a lot of money but they don't see any of it. For example, young researchers are often not taken seriously.
- The level of involvement depends very much on the researcher's position within his or her institution, who has the legitimacy to defend his or her case (depending on the level of power). Today, the people who apply are ultimately experts who have very close links with the current authors of the IPCC and IPBES.
- The proliferation of institutions and panels raises questions about how to reduce costs, pool efforts and take advantage of existing sub-national efforts. For example, in the UK, in a context of cost-cutting, there is a need to optimise funds, which has led to reductions in funding for experts (as in the case of nexus and TC) and in the dissemination of published assessments.

### **Some recommendations:**

- Draw inspiration from the processes put in place at national level and transpose them to IPBES.
- Demonstrate the importance of IPBES assessments to governments, ministries and institutes.
- Find other sources of funding (e.g. Biodiversa+ or other).
- Include work on international platforms in the experts' core missions (which may counterbalance the lack of funding on certain points): need for agreement from the institution or employer (request to be made by the individual expert).

- It is important to include other young experts who have not previously been involved or who do not already have links with IPBES experts, in order to increase the size of the community of experts.
- From the point of view of a wealthy government (UK), it is always difficult to mobilise funds to support experts. We can also see that the financial situation of IPBES is very tight. We therefore need to rethink the IPBES business model, find new sources of funding, review how governments and NGOs are involved, and review how authors are funded.
- Include in the evaluation criteria for researchers involvement in international processes so that this is valued.
- Other information: IUCN: reminder of the RESPIN & Stakeholders questionnaire (IPBES) to be completed + results shared and available.

## Parallel session 3: IPCC processes and opportunities for National Focal Points

Facilitator: Nathalie Morata (FRB)


### Session 1

Philippe Tulkens (European Commission) presented the IPCC process and opportunities for National Focal Points. He presented the special role of EU as an “observer” who can vote, and be a provider of knowledge in an IPCC report. He gave an overview of the key responsibilities of the NFPs, then raised the opportunities, the benefits and challenges. Some benefits of EU participating in IPCC are maximizing the impact of EU science, increase the relevance of EU R&I programming, acknowledgment of EU leadership, whereas the challenges are for example the difficulties to reform the governance in IPCC and IPBES, politization of SPI, approach to SSH,... Finally, he presented a slide on how RESPIN can help. Gerrit Hansen (Senior Advisor IPCC WGI TSU) talked about Stakeholder engagement and capacity building in IPCC. She gave an overview of different examples of capacity building: the IPCC secretariat does have “outreach materials” such as flyers, videos, slides, an office for climate education, stakeholder webinars etc. to improve the readability and accessibility of the material that they have. For NFPs, the Secretariat organises introductory sessions for newly appointed NFPs. She emphasized the value of hosting IPCC events to build capacity. And finally, Sebastian Koenig (NFP Switzerland) presented the case of Switzerland in relation to IPCC and the more general role of governments. In order to have an impact, it is important to have the involvement of the governments in the process, as there are many political implications in the IPCC process, for example when the Plenary tries to define governance within the IPCC structure or decides on who’s hosting the IPCC secretariat. He also presented the interplay at national level, and shared an example on how Switzerland uses IPCC at national level for climate scenarios.

### Session 2 (fishbowl)

The discussion revolved around the challenges of integrating climate and biodiversity science into national and subnational policymaking. One participant highlighted the importance of shaping IPCC products to target specific audiences, noting the difficulty of translating global scientific assessments into national contexts. Another participant from Latin America emphasized the challenge of making important findings relevant at the national level, and subnational levels often lack meaningful data. In Romania, the challenge of convincing politicians to base decisions on science was discussed, with efforts focused on mobilizing a network to bring science into the political sphere. Even if the action plan is very concrete, the implementation remains an important issue.

One participant shared how they had initiated a project to integrate local and national contexts into the IPCC’s global picture through interactive tools and assessments. Another participant from Armenia presented a youth board initiative aimed at engaging young people in climate discussions, asking for advice on how to raise awareness and ownership in this context. A participant from Belgium shared his experience with organising an IPBES day in Belgium,



where the outcomes of recent assessments were discussed amongst stakeholders. Even though climate scientists were invited, it remains a challenge to keep them interested due to the potential irrelevance for their work.

Participants from Belgium and Romania highlighted the difficulty of engaging social scientists to contribute to IPCC assessments. In Romania, NGOs were eager to contribute, but there were challenges regarding their ability to produce academic results. Several participants, including from Switzerland, discussed the importance of effectively communicating with NGOs at the national level and involving them in decision-making processes. A participant from Latin America shared how their country's National Ecosystem Assessment used infographics to raise awareness and reach different stakeholders. The importance of integrating traditional knowledge alongside social sciences was also noted.

A representative from IPBES suggested sharing best practices among National Focal Points (NFPs) to ease the workload and encourage more widespread engagement, such as by creating templates for invitations or policy briefs. Switzerland praised IPBES for its use of factsheets for policy, which they felt could serve as an example for IPCC to improve its communication. A participant from France suggested that doctoral schools and universities could be key in disseminating IPBES and IPCC findings, as they often include compulsory courses on climate change and biodiversity. Outreach to universities through letters was identified as a cheap and easy activity to implement with great benefits. One participant from Turkey shared their efforts to engage both the climate and biodiversity NFPs but noted that institutional changes disrupted the initiative. Informal platforms where both IPCC and IPBES NFPs are brought together were seen as interesting initiative.

Discussions about using AI to streamline access to reports were also brought up. While AI could facilitate easier extraction and analysis of information, some participants, including a representative from the European Commission, raised concerns about the accuracy and verification of AI-generated data, especially when it comes to nuanced and complex scientific language. Despite these challenges, AI was seen as a potential tool to assist in integrating climate data and improving accessibility, particularly for non-English-speaking regions.


## Parallel session 4: IPCC processes and opportunities for Experts

Facilitators: Yamini Yogya (UfZ), Divija Jata (Belspo)

### Session 1

Christiane Textor (German Aerospace Center) presented various pathways for experts to contribute to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), highlighting roles such as authoring reports, providing specialized expertise, reviewing drafts, and participating in expert workshops. The process of becoming an IPCC author or reviewer follows a structured path: an open call for experts, nominations by institutions or governments, and final selection by the IPCC Bureau based on expertise and regional representation. Key roles in the assessment process include Coordinating Lead Authors (CLA), Lead Authors (LA), Review Editors (RE), and Contributing Authors. The nomination process for the Seventh Assessment Report (AR7) is open until April 17<sup>th</sup>. The discussion also covered the differences between IPCC and IPBES in terms of expert engagement, with emphasis on the role of Technical Support Units (TSUs) and the challenges faced by developing country scientists. While IPCC participation offers valuable opportunities, it also requires extensive outreach, consensus-building, and practitioner engagement beyond academic circles. The IPCC Scholarship Fund provides support for early-career researchers, and experts were encouraged to explore Task Groups (TG data) and the IPCC Bureau for further opportunities.

Svitlana Krakovska, Ukraine's IPCC National Focal Point, shared her experiences recruiting expert authors for the 2024 IPCC methodological report on short-lived climate forcers. She emphasized various ways experts can contribute, from reviewing reports and providing comments to engaging in IPCC communication channels. A major challenge remains



making climate science both accessible and actionable for policymakers, as well as encouraging participation from non-traditional experts such as urban planners and engineers. The European Climate Foundation is hosting webinars on expert nominations, presenting a valuable opportunity for interested participants.

Frank McGovern (Environmental Protection Agency, Ireland) discussed gaps between science and policy in the IPCC, noting that political agreements under Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), such as the Kigali Amendment (2016), influence scientific priorities. Expanding diverse knowledge systems, improving expert engagement across disciplines, and strengthening global climate observation systems were identified as key challenges. However, barriers such as limited funding, lack of institutional support, and no mandatory participation requirements for institutions continue to hinder broader involvement, particularly for experts from developing countries. Strengthening institutional frameworks and securing dedicated funding were highlighted as crucial steps for ensuring more inclusive participation in the IPCC process.

## **Session 2 (fishbowl)**

The discussion highlighted several key challenges related to balancing time commitments and securing institutional support for participation in scientific assessments. Experts noted the need to demonstrate the benefits of involvement, such as the value of bringing process insights back to their institutions, to gain support. Differences between public institutions and private sector involvement also surfaced, particularly regarding how practitioners could be engaged in these processes.

The topic of conflict of interest (COI) policies in IPCC reports was also explored, with a focus on the necessity of ensuring objectivity and the importance of reviewing contributions from private companies. There was an acknowledgment that the IPCC largely relies on peer-reviewed published and grey literature, with COI policies ensuring credibility through rigorous review processes. On a broader scale, institutional support for participation in global assessments varies significantly between developed and developing countries, with prestige often recognized post-assessment cycle. The engagement of National Focal Points (NFPs) is another area of variation, with some regions finding it easier to engage with IPBES than IPCC.

Further challenges were raised regarding the transparency of the IPCC's bureau selection process and the logistics surrounding author collaborations. A key observation was that while IPCC remains more siloed within disciplines, IPBES tends to be more interdisciplinary. There was also a call for greater representation of social sciences, as natural sciences remain more dominant. Communication between physical and social scientists was another barrier, particularly due to differences in jargon and approaches to uncertainty. Some social scientists expressed frustration with the IPCC's tendency to prioritize quantifying uncertainty, with context-specific assessments sometimes dismissed as trivial. Overall, the discussion emphasized the need for more inclusive and transparent processes to foster collaboration across disciplines and regions.

## **Tuesday 11th March afternoon – thematic sessions**

### **Interactive Session – IPBES Transformative Change Assessment**

Facilitators: Yves Zinnbrege (UfZ), Axel Paulsch (IBN)

The session introduced the IPBES transformative change assessment, emphasizing its significance and applications. Through a World Café discussion, participants explored the five key strategies as presented in this assessment:



1. **Conservation & Stewardship:** Collaboration across sectors like agriculture, forestry, health, education and digital technology is essential, with key actors including policymakers, Indigenous communities, and businesses. Integrating ecological knowledge into decision-making and land-use planning is crucial, while recognizing that different sectors not only need to adapt but can actively drive change. Participants also highlighted that preserving biodiversity by enhancing legal protections and shifting land-use practices is important.
2. **Sectoral Transformation:** Urgent reforms in high-impact sectors (agriculture, mining, infrastructure) require policy shifts, awareness, and education, as seen in a Northern Macedonia case study.
3. **Economic Paradigm Shift:** Transforming financial systems to prioritize nature and equity is challenging but necessary, with mass tourism, banking, and industry as key sectors. Collaboration with the IPCC (cfr. Carbon trading) could support implementation.
4. **Governance & Accountability:** Inclusive, adaptive governance, international cooperation, and diverse perspectives are critical in driving change across agriculture, finance, and legislation.
5. **Cultural & Societal Shifts:** Changing societal values to embrace human-nature interconnectedness involves education, media, arts, and grassroots initiatives, engaging schools, NGOs, and influencers.

The discussions underscored the need for interdisciplinary, context-specific solutions to achieve meaningful transformation.

## Interactive Session – Biodiversa+ Nature-based solutions for climate change adaptation and mitigation: a clash of words on tough choices

Facilitator: Biodiversa+ BiodivClim Knowledge Hub

After an introduction to the BiodivClim knowledge hub, developed by a group of dedicated researchers from various Biodiversa+ BiodivClim-funded projects who aim at bridging Biodiversity and Climate Change Research with Nature-based Solutions, a "House of Commons"-style debate followed, focused on solutions for climate change and biodiversity loss. Participants engaged in role play, with two confronting rows disputing key motions, mimicking the UK House of Commons approach.

1. **Decarbonization vs. Biodiversity Conservation:**  
Supporters of decarbonization argued that reducing emissions is essential for long-term climate solutions. In contrast, those favoring biodiversity stressed the irreplaceable role of ecosystems for human survival, warning that biodiversity loss is irreversible.
2. **Nature-based Solutions:**  
Participants debated whether the success of NbS should be measured by economic or ecological benefits. The economic side argued for measurable outcomes to drive investment, while the ecological side emphasized the long-term importance of preserving ecosystems.
3. **Regulatory Enforcement vs. Financial Incentives:**  
The debate on NbS implementation centered on whether regulations or financial incentives should take priority. Advocates for regulation argued that legal frameworks ensure compliance, while supporters of incentives focused on motivating individuals and businesses.

4. **Land Ownership for Ecological Restoration:**

Participants discussed whether public ownership should be prioritized over private ownership for ecological restoration, with public ownership seen as more effective for large-scale projects.

5. **Large-Scale vs. Small-Scale Nbs:**

Large-scale proponents emphasized cost-effectiveness and broader environmental impact, while small-scale supporters valued local engagement and targeted benefits.

6. **In-Depth Knowledge vs. Integrating Knowledge Systems:**

The debate explored whether specialized knowledge or integrating diverse knowledge systems is more effective for addressing climate change and biodiversity loss. Both approaches were recognized as valuable for creating holistic solutions.

**Participant Feelings:**

The debate emphasized the need for integrated solutions, combining ecological, social, and economic considerations. Participants left with a deeper understanding of the complexities in balancing decarbonization, biodiversity, and Nature-based Solutions.

**Results:** This session will lead to a scientific paper written by BiodivClim experts.


## Interactive Session – Raising awareness of IPBES and IPCC findings (RESPIN F3)

Facilitator: Kaisa Korhonen-Kurki (Syke)

In a presentation by a representative from the Finnish Environment Institute, the discussion focused on how the findings of IPBES and IPCC are integrated into EU policies, explored through a policy coherence analysis. Using a cluster analysis method, the research conducted by the Finnish Environment Institute explored various policy areas including biodiversity, climate, agriculture, and trade, and examined how these policies align with IPBES and IPCC reports. The findings suggested that most EU policies either show synergies with the reports or do not explicitly mention them. For biodiversity policies, the EU Biodiversity Strategy mentioned IPBES only once and raised concerns about the lack of equity and justice considerations. The European Green Deal and adaptation strategies in climate policies were vague in their incorporation of IPCC findings, while the CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) and the Farm to Fork Strategy focused on institutional capabilities. The trade policies, particularly the deforestation regulation, considered multiple clusters, while the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism lacked attention to growth-related drivers.

The conclusion pointed out that while EU policies generally align with the IPCC and IPBES reports, their influence on policy-making remains ambiguous. There is uncertainty about how policies are derived, with some EU members expressing pushback on aligning these domains. A representative from the EU commission responded by acknowledging the complexity of policy work, especially when it comes to integrating IPBES into EU strategies. He noted that although IPBES is a newer player in EU policy, its focus on justice and equity is becoming more recognized, and references to IPBES are sometimes removed during parliamentary negotiations. He highlighted that Horizon Europe and the EU Nature regulation show strong uptake of IPBES findings, and that the concept of "nature positive" is now being integrated into policy, though challenges remain.

In the Q&A session, participants discussed the importance of translating IPCC/IPBES findings into actionable insights for specific sectors and stakeholder groups. The need for increased collaboration between IPCC and IPBES was emphasized, as well as the importance of properly translating findings into policy language. Concerns about insufficient funding and human resources to support the uptake of these findings were also raised. Finally, it was suggested that a formal process be established to ensure that key reports are adapted to meet the needs of national governments and



policymakers, underscoring the need for better governance and communication between climate and biodiversity experts.

## Interactive Session – Raising awareness of IPBES and IPCC processes as National Focal Point (RESPIN F4)

Facilitators: Jennifer Hauck (CoKnow), Claire Brown (UNEP-WCMC)

The discussion centred around how RESPIN can engage with the IPBES and IPCC processes, focusing on how to showcase their work and support expert involvement. RESPIN is developing factsheets and online courses to help experts engage with these processes. The factsheets will offer a brief overview of IPBES and IPCC, emphasizing their focus areas, similarities, and differences. The goal of the session was to refine the content based on participant input to make the materials more useful for potential contributors, especially National Focal Points (NFPs) and experts.

In terms of online courses, RESPIN is developing three self-paced courses hosted on the Learning for Nature platform: one introducing IPBES and IPCC, another on the interlinkages between climate change and biodiversity, and a third on how to use the assessments from both organizations. The courses will be free, long-term, and available to anyone, with an emphasis on high-quality content that integrates multiple learning elements. Participants were encouraged to brainstorm ways to enhance these courses for maximum impact.

The conversation also addressed the challenges of identifying and motivating experts, particularly in developed vs. developing countries. Strategies include using social media, leveraging National Biodiversity Platforms, and engaging NGOs to identify potential contributors. NFPs could work with institutions to identify experts, and IPBES could improve direct outreach to institutions, similar to the IPCC's approach. Motivating experts involves showcasing the impact of their contributions, providing testimonials from previous contributors, and ensuring transparency about the time commitment. Additionally, institutional support is critical; NFPs can contact institutions directly and provide draft letters and practical advice to encourage their involvement. For social scientists there should be more recognition of their engagement for their career path within their institution.

Managing expectations around the nomination and selection process is crucial to maintaining transparency and engagement. One approach could be to accompany letters of non-selection with a list of alternative opportunities for involvement, ensuring that nominees remain engaged and encouraged to contribute in other ways. This could include roles in expert workshops, review processes, or outreach/uptake activities, providing meaningful avenues for participation beyond the initial selection. By offering clear guidance on other ways to engage, the process can feel more inclusive and constructive, fostering continued interest and collaboration within the scientific and policy communities.

There is also a differences between what the experts and politicians understand of specific terms in the assessments. There was a suggestion that for experts, it would be nice to explain to them the political meaning of some terms to avoid or know how to navigate some discussions in plenary. Moreover, a participant mentioned that IPCC and IPBES assessments should include some examples of policy impact and case studies.

Marketing and communication strategies were discussed, noting that many researchers are unaware of IPBES, and more targeted outreach is needed. The upcoming second Global Assessment was identified as a good opportunity to explain the importance of IPBES and attract expert participation. Finally, it was emphasized that understanding the IPBES process, including its conceptual framework and timeline, is essential for experts. The courses and materials should clarify these aspects to ensure potential contributors are prepared for the commitment involved.

## Interactive Session – How can the information from reports be selected and presented to timely inform policy processes? (RESPIN F4)

Facilitators: Jennifer Hauck (CoKnow), Claire Brown (UNEP-WCMC)

In this session on how 'how information from reports can be selected and presented to timely inform policy processes', some participants raised concerns that the IPCC and IPBES Summary for Policymakers (SPMs) sometimes omit key elements of the full reports, raising concerns about comprehensive representation. Recently, there has been growing exploration of AI tools for synthesizing key findings, including the development of "climateQ&A," an AI tool designed specifically for IPBES and IPCC reports, though its current use remains unclear. Efforts have also been made to make IPCC language more accessible, resulting in a "Summary for All." Additionally, factsheets, authored independently without government approval, offer insights free from political influence. Regarding the AR7 timeline, France proposed aligning it with the next UNFCCC global uptake, but other delegations opposed this, emphasizing IPCC's role as policy-informative rather than prescriptive. A critical challenge remains in ensuring that reports published remain relevant for policymakers amid a rapidly evolving body of scientific literature.

## Interactive Session – How can IPBES and IPCC be stronger considered by existing information processes that inform policy and decision making? (RESPIN F2)

Facilitator: Alicia Pérez-Porro (CREAF)


This session focused on two key aspects: the results of a Social Network Analysis (SNA) and national experiences integrating IPBES and IPCC findings into policy. The SNA findings provided an overview of how scientific knowledge of IPBES and IPCC is shared and applied, while participants shared insights from their national contexts on the challenges and opportunities for integrating biodiversity and climate science into governance.

Several key themes emerged. Entry points are critical for incorporating IPBES and IPCC findings into national policies. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, reports like NBSAPs and NDCs serve as gateways for integrating scientific data. A national biodiversity platform involving multiple stakeholders helps mainstream these findings, making them more accessible for policymakers and practitioners, including private sector actors like mining companies. In contrast, subnational governments, such as in Barcelona, struggle with integration due to the lack of direct policy frameworks like NBSAPs. Hybrid professionals—those with expertise in both research and policy—were identified as essential in bridging this gap.

Participants also discussed the challenges of translating complex scientific data into actionable policies. Romania's experience highlighted the difficulty researchers face in navigating international biodiversity policy frameworks, while in Georgia, smaller nations benefit from international meetings like PESC to build capacity and share experiences. In Portugal, political experience emphasized the need for trust, transparency, and reliability in science-policy integration. The UK perspective noted that many scientists do not fully understand government structures, making better transparency from policymakers to academics essential for collaboration.

National contexts also influence policy engagement strategies. In Spain, trust-building often happens informally through social interactions. In India, ethical standards for fieldwork differ from those in the US, requiring cultural adaptation. In Ukraine, NGOs play a crucial role in linking scientists and policymakers, using different communication channels to advocate for science-based policy decisions.





Overall, successful application of IPBES and IPCC findings into governance requires context-specific adaptation, stakeholder engagement, and trust-building. Identifying the right entry points within national frameworks is essential to ensuring that scientific knowledge informs policy and practical implementation effectively.

## Wednesday 12th March – interlinkages between climate and biodiversity

### Panel Discussion – Understanding the Interlinkages Between Biodiversity and Climate Change – The Current State of Play

Facilitator: Nathalie Morata (FRB)

Panelists: Belma Kalamujic Stoil (Biodiversity Expert, Bosnia and Herzegovina), Sebastian Koenig, (IPBES/IPCC Focal Point, Switzerland), Karin Zaunberger (European Commission), Amy Oen (Norwegian Geotechnical Institute):


The presentation by the Nathalie Morata highlighted the importance of an integrated "nexus" approach, emphasizing synergies between biodiversity, water, food, health, and climate change to achieve the best outcomes for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The session explored the linkages between the IPBES and IPCC, with discussions on strengthening collaboration between the two platforms through joint reviews, working groups, and shared agendas. Panelists, including biodiversity and climate experts, underscored the urgent impacts of climate change on ecosystems, such as habitat loss, genetic biodiversity decline, and species migration shifts. Research findings emphasized the need for diverse ecosystems to enhance climate resilience, while policy discussions focused on breaking down siloed approaches at national and global levels. Lessons from conservation efforts pointed to the importance of local engagement and holistic approaches beyond just protected areas. Challenges in implementation were noted, particularly in financing and policy coherence, with calls for better integration of biodiversity and climate strategies. The discussion also addressed political obstacles, stressing the need for clear communication to policymakers, public awareness, and engagement with younger generations to keep nature and climate at the forefront of political agendas.

### Panel Discussion – The Future of Biodiversity-Climate Interlinkages – Opportunities for Action and Innovation

Facilitator: Alicia Pérez-Porro (CREAF)

Panelists: Karin Zaunberger (European Commission), Roseline Remans (CGIAR, Belgium), Saso Gorjanc (IPOS)

The discussion highlighted amongst others the urgent need to integrate ocean considerations into both IPCC and IPBES assessments, given their critical role in climate and biodiversity dynamics. Strengthening implementation capacity for global targets was emphasized, for example through mechanisms like the International Platform for Ocean Sustainability (IPOS). Panelists explored the root causes of biodiversity loss as presented in the Transformative Change Assessment, including disconnection from nature, power concentration, and short-term economic priorities, stressing that addressing these requires interdisciplinary collaboration. Multilateralism remains essential despite its challenges, as global crises cannot be solved by individual nations alone. Existing mechanisms should be used more efficiently, ensuring that climate and biodiversity policies are linked not just at strategic levels but in practical, community-based actions that yield tangible results. The cost of inaction was underscored, with calls for increased investment in biodiversity conservation and the need to simplify policy frameworks. To bridge the gap between science, policy, and implementation, collaborative learning, adaptive governance, and stronger communication strategies are crucial. The



conversation reinforced that climate and biodiversity must be addressed together, focusing on synergies rather than trade-offs. Stepping out of silos and fostering inclusivity in decision-making processes were seen as key to making meaningful progress.

## Thursday 13th March: Understanding policy and uptake

### Panel Discussion – National and subnational uptake

Facilitator: Yves Zinngrebe (UfZ)


Panelists: Ana Maria Hernandez (Independent), Eva Spehn (Swiss Academy of Sciences), Jennifer Hauck (CoKnow), Tamar Pataridze (Caucasus Nature Fund), Christiane Textor (German Aerospace Center)

The discussion emphasized the critical need for improved uptake of scientific assessments into policy and action, highlighting frameworks like the CBD, GBF, UNFCCC, and the Paris Agreement. These mechanisms guide global commitments that translate into national strategies (e.g., NDCs, NBSAPs) and local projects. Different governance approaches—integrative, inclusive, accountable, and adaptive—were explored as pathways to enhance knowledge uptake. Key challenges include bridging the gap between assessments and decision-making, as scientific findings often struggle to gain political traction. National assessments, such as those in Germany and Switzerland, have revealed missed opportunities due to fragmented communication between scientists and policymakers. Panellists stressed the importance of structured stakeholder engagement, informal scientist-policy exchanges, and the translation of findings into accessible formats. Political will remains a decisive factor, as policymakers operate within competing mandates, and misinformation further complicates knowledge dissemination. Recommendations included fostering national networks, adapting messages to specific contexts, ‘a summary for citizens’ and engaging non-traditional sectors. Collaborative learning and cross-country exchanges, like the ECA network, were cited as promising approaches. Strengthening horizontal and vertical coordination, integrating biodiversity into planning, and involving the private sector were identified as essential steps to drive meaningful action.

## Closing remarks and feedback

The event concluded with a forward-looking session highlighting key opportunities and next steps. Boris Erg (IUCN European Regional Office) introduced IUCN’s European Regional Office, based in Brussels, and the upcoming opportunities within the IUCN, followed by Anna Heck (IPBES NFP Belgium), who outlined future engagement possibilities with IPCC and IPBES, such as ongoing assessments and open author calls (for the IPBES’ Second Global Assessment – and the IPCC’ AR7).

Yves Zinngrebe (UfZ) then presented the next steps for RESPIN, emphasizing the importance of continued collaboration. He wrapped up with an insightful session facilitated by the Mentimeter, providing a snapshot of participant perspectives and highlighting key takeaways for the next steps. Participants appreciated the opportunity to bring both climate and biodiversity communities together at PESC-RESPIN and they valued learning more about IPCC specifically. The most appreciated aspects of the meeting included networking, thematic sessions, interactive formats such as fishbowl sessions, and informal moments like the city tour and long coffee breaks. Looking ahead, RESPIN should focus on strengthening collaboration between the two panels, supporting national-level uptake, engaging more experts from IPBES and IPCC, and fostering a strong network of focal points. Participants also identified areas for improvement, such as increasing interactivity, extending the poster session, involving more IPCC representatives, providing examples of national implementation, and exploring strategies to influence political will.



Additionally, they expressed interest in country case studies, integrated sessions for IPCC and IPBES focal points, and broader engagement with other science-policy initiatives.

Finally, Eva Spehn (Swiss Academy of Sciences) delivered closing remarks, reflecting on the insights shared and the collective efforts needed to drive progress.

In conclusion, the discussions reinforced a shared commitment to biodiversity and climate, leaving participants inspired to take action and stay engaged.