

# IPBES, Governments, and Stakeholders: bridging the divide between science and policy

**Shawn Carter, Chief Scientist  
National Climate Change & Wildlife  
Science Center**

**ESA Annual Meeting  
August 9, 2012**



# Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

- a. Independent Scientific Body
- b. Comes from Millennium Ecosystem Assessment & French Initiative
- c. Be an “IPCC” like mechanism for Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services Assessment
- d. The IPBES was formed as a result of 4+ years of discussion through UNEP and other mechanisms
- e. Final decisions to move forward on a IPBES was made in 2010 in Busan, South Korea
- f. IPBES approved in April 2012 in Panama City, Panama

## Busan Outcome – IPBES Principles

- **Scientifically independent. Credible, Relevant and Legitimate.**
- **Policy-relevant but not policy-prescriptive.**
- **Recognize regional contexts and needs**
- **Full and effective participation of developing countries**

# Busan Outcome – IPBES Principles

- **Interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach**
- **Respect the contribution of indigenous and local knowledge**
- **Address terrestrial, marine and inland water biodiversity and ecosystem services and their interactions.**
- **Integrate capacity building into all relevant aspects of its work**

# Current Status following Panama City

1. Decide to establish an independent intergovernmental body
2. The first session of the Plenary of the Platform will decide on the link between the Platform and the United Nations
3. Further decided,
  - (a) Many functions, operating principles and institutional arrangements were agreed
  - (b) The secretariat of the United Nations Environment Programme to facilitate the Platform in the interim
  - (c) The secretariat of the Platform is in Bonn, Germany;
  - (d) Rules of procedure are still being developed, interim rules are to be used and may be modified by the Plenary
  - (e) The present resolution and any future decisions have a legally non binding nature.

# Scientific Functions of IPBES

- a) **Providing advice on scientific and technical aspects of the Platform's programme of work;**
- b) **Providing advice and assistance on technical and/or scientific communication matters;**
- c) **Managing the Platform's peer-review process for all products**
- d) **Achieve balance across disciplines and types of knowledge, gender, and contributions / participation from developing countries**

## Scientific Functions of IPBES- Continued

- e) **Assure scientific and technical coordination between the Platform and other related processes**
- f) ***[Exploring approaches to facilitating the sharing and transfer of technology]***
- g) **Exploring ways to bring different knowledge systems, including indigenous knowledge systems, into the science-policy interface.**



# Scientific Oversight will initially be from a Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP)

The interim membership have equal representation of five participants from each of the five UN regions,

The arrangement will be for not more than two years

The final regional structure and expert composition to be agreed at a session of the Plenary.

The U.S. Govt. is working on nomination process to the MEP

Proposed to the have the interim MEP sort out the regions and membership issues for approval by the Plenary



## Scientific Program of Work – Intersessional Work

1. Critical Review of Assessments – Draft completed by August 2012
2. Conceptual Framework – Draft completed for review by September 2012
3. Capacity Building – Governments submitting proposals on needs and suggestions for activities.
4. Scoping Process – Countries are submitting ideas on how the assessments should be scoped.

# The U.S. Government Analog to IPBES

1. U.S. Government should institute and fund a Quadrennial Ecosystem Services Trend Assessment (QuEST)
2. Dept. of State and OSTP should provide a leading role in IPBES.
3. CENRS should identify data gaps within existing biodiversity inventories and clarify priorities and roles and funding for filling these.
4. NSTC should establish an Ecoinformatics-based Open Resources and Machine Accessibility (EcoINFORMA) initiative.



REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT  
SUSTAINING ENVIRONMENTAL  
CAPITAL: PROTECTING SOCIETY  
AND THE ECONOMY

Executive Office of the President  
President's Council of Advisors  
on Science and Technology

JULY 2011



# U.S. Govt. Activities on QuEST Implementation

1. Characterize and collate existing assessments and data sources related to biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecosystem services.
2. Summarize lessons learned from prior large assessments to inform near-term products/reports.
3. Engage leaders and stakeholders to identify key questions for ecosystem services trends assessments.
4. Prepare synthesis products based on existing assessments, commencing with forests and rangelands.
5. Develop a long-term conceptual framework to organize Federal cooperation and collaboration on existing assessments.

## Next Steps on IPBES

1. Further Development of the Work Programme
2. First Plenary session in 2013 to finalize rules and functions
3. Develop first list of assessments in 2013.
4. And maybe, just maybe start an assessment....