Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

UN environment programme

World Health Organization

World Organisation for Animal Health
Founded as OIE

Thought Starter on Key Elements for Establishing an Independent Panel for Evidence for Action against Antimicrobial Resistance (IPEA)

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List of Abbreviations

AMR	Antimicrobial resistance
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GLG	Global Leaders Group on AMR
IACG	Inter-Agency Coordination Group on AMR
InforMEA	United Nations Information Portal on Multilateral Environmental Agreements
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPEA	Independent Panel for Evidence for Action Against Antimicrobial Resistance
IRP	International Resource Panel
MEAs	Multilateral environmental agreements
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
REIOs	Regional economic integration organizations
TSUs	Technical support units
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNSG	United Nations Secretary-General
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

1 Introduction

1.1 Background and Purpose of the Document

1. Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a growing global health and development threat that occurs when bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites no longer respond to antimicrobial agents[OBJ]. As a result of drug resistance, antibiotics and other antimicrobial agents become ineffective and infections become difficult or impossible to treat, increasing the risk of disease spread, severe illness and death. AMR undermines the effectiveness of modern human and animal medicine, making infections harder to treat and leading to prolonged illnesses, higher medical costs, and increased mortality rates. The consequences of AMR extend beyond human health, affecting food security, and economic stability. AMR is also closely linked to environmental sustainability since the environment plays a key role in the emergence, transmission and spread of AMR.

2. AMR is driven by various factors. In particular, the worldwide emergence, transmission and spread of antimicrobial-resistant microbes by people, animals, and the environment is hugely affected by the overuse and misuse of antimicrobials in human and veterinary medicine, as well as in various consumer products including some pesticides. Contributing factors also include lack of access to clean water, open rather than closed sewage systems, poor infection prevention and control practices, inadequate provision of diagnostics, farming systems with suboptimum regulation of antimicrobials, weak waste and wastewater management, and high population densities.[1] Hence, solving the threat of AMR requires a coordinated, science-driven global response of all relevant sectors.

3. In 2019, the report of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on AMR (IACG) to the UN Secretary-General (UNSG)[2] recommended the establishment of an Independent Panel on Evidence for Action against AMR as part of the AMR global governance structures, alongside the Global Leaders Group on AMR[3] and the AMR Multistakeholder Partnership Platform[4], both of which have already been established.

4. At the 79th Session of the UN General Assembly in September 2024, Member States adopted the Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting on Antimicrobial Resistance (hereafter referred to as "the 2024 Political Declaration on AMR").[5] The Declaration invited "*the Quadripartite organizations to establish an independent panel for evidence for action against antimicrobial resistance in 2025 to facilitate the generation and use of multisectoral, scientific evidence to support Member States in efforts to tackle antimicrobial resistance, making use of existing resources and avoiding duplication of on-going efforts, after an open and transparent consultation with all Member States on its composition, mandate, scope, and deliverables*."

5. To facilitate the establishment and operations of a robust and effective independent panel for evidence for action against antimicrobial resistance (IPEA), the Quadripartite organizations will develop a comprehensive set of key relevant documents. This document, together with its summary, is the first step of the consultative process and serves as an initial discussion starter,

1 https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(15)00473-0

2 Available at: https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/antimicrobial-resistance/amr-gcp-tjs/iacg/summaries/iacg_final_summary_en.pdf

3 https://www.amrleaders.org

4 https://www.qjsamr.org/multistakeholder-partnership-platform/about

5 https://www.un.org/pga/wp-content/uploads/sites/108/2024/09/FINAL-Text-AMR-to-PGA.pdf

outlining key elements essential to the panel's establishment, effectiveness, and impacts. Based on feedback, the Quadripartite organizations will refine and prepare a set of key documents for the establishment and operations of the panel for subsequent consultation towards the panel launch in 2025.

1.2 Scope, Methodology, and Structure of the Document

6. This thought starter aims to, through a comparative analysis of concrete existing science-policy panels, provide a sense of the key elements that need to be consulted and developed towards establishing a panel that is scientifically credible, policy-relevant, and politically legitimate.

7. It is important to note that this thought starter primarily addresses the design aspects of IPEA, rather than specifying the exact areas of work it should undertake. This approach is intentional for two key reasons: (1) AMR is a highly complex and rapidly evolving issue, with shifting agendas and priorities over time. What is considered a priority today may not remain so in the future. (2) Drawing from existing examples, evolving priorities can be effectively addressed through a robust and agile institutional structure—one that facilitates, among other things, the development of specific work programmes and activities over time through an open, transparent, and inclusive process. Such an approach may also help ensure that IPEA builds on existing initiatives and avoids unnecessary duplication (for more details, see Sections 2.1, 2.2 and 2.7).

8. Before preparing this thought starter, the Quadripartite organizations conducted a research of various science-policy panels and their documents at different levels. They engaged in consultations within the organizations and with partners. It was considered essential that the model panels align with the characteristics outlined in the 2024 Political Declaration on AMR. These characteristics include being global, operating as independent panels, facilitating the generation and use of multi-sectoral, scientific evidence, and aiming to support Member States in their response to AMR avoiding duplication of ongoing efforts. Subsequently, three science-policy panels were chosen by the Quadripartite organisations to serve as the examples for developing this thought starter.

9. The reviewed science-policy panels include the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC),[6] the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES),[7] and the International Resource Panel (IRP).[8] These are interdisciplinary and intersectoral platforms designed to provide authoritative science advice, enhance coordination and engage with broader communities, addressing complex, evolving challenges—many of these features mirror the challenges and needs of containing AMR. For each panel, official documents, including effectiveness evaluations, and relevant scientific and grey literature, are reviewed and synthesized. Furthermore, previous documents relevant to the establishment of IPEA are reviewed and taken into account, including Final Revised Terms of Reference of the Independent Panel on Evidence for Action Against Antimicrobial Resistance.[9]

10. It is important to note that, while the panels referenced are coincidentally intergovernmental in nature, this thought starter does not seek to pre-emptively determine that IPEA must follow the same model. Rather, the intention is to draw upon the experience and structure of these well-

[6] https://www.ipcc.ch

[7] https://www.ipbes.net

[8] https://www.resourcepanel.org

[9] https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/antimicrobial-resistance/draft-tor-evidence-panel-(final-for-public-discussion)15-05-20.pdf

established and impactful panels to comprehensively identify key elements that contribute to a strong and effective science-policy panel. This approach is intended to contribute constructively to ongoing discussion on IPEA's potential design, ensuring it is tailored to its intended purpose, while deliberately avoiding any prescription of a specific institutional structure at this stage.

11. In addition to the Introduction, this thought starter includes the following two substantive chapters. Chapter 2 presents the results of the comparative analysis, organized into sections focusing on individual key elements for IPEA's establishment and operations. Each section begins with an analysis of existing panels, followed by considerations for IPEA's development to guide further discussion. Chapter 3 offers an overarching summary of all the elements, outlining potential ways forward for IPEA's establishment and operation.

2 Options on the Key Elements for the Establishment and Operations of IPEA

12. Typically, science-policy panels focus primarily on assessing and synthesizing existing scientific evidence to support informed policymaking, while drawing upon original research and evidence produced by the broader scientific community and other knowledge holders. Before discussing the individual key elements for the establishment and operations of a robust and effective IPEA, it is critical to consider factors that can contribute to the robustness and effectiveness of a science-policy panel. Many assessments and initiatives exist on this matter, e.g., UNEP's "*Assessment of Options for Strengthening the Science-Policy Interface at the International Level for the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste*"[10] and "*Strengthening the Science-Policy Interface in International Chemicals Governance: A Mapping and Gap Analysis*",[11] and a workshop titled "*Lessons learned for antimicrobial resistance (LL4AMR) from previous international science panels*" that took place in April 2025 in Nigeria. These assessments and initiatives identified key lessons for designing a robust and effective panel, which are considered in the following sections:

    a. To produce authoritative, policy-relevant (but not policy-prescriptive) outputs, a science-policy panel must uphold core qualities such as scientific credibility,[12] policy relevance,[13] and political legitimacy[14] through its formal or informal set-ups and procedures.

    b. A science-policy panel should be agile, with efficient practices that minimize duplication, reduce bureaucratic and administrative burdens, ensure flexibility, and adapt to changing circumstances for continuous improvement. It should also be inclusive, ensuring diverse contributions from experts across disciplines, regions, ways of knowing, and stakeholder groups while avoiding conflicts of interest.

    c. The panel's nature (e.g., being independent, being intergovernmental), composition and representativeness, and stakeholder participation influence its core qualities.

[10] https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/33808/OSSP.pdf

[11] https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/31184/unea-4-inf9-spi-feb26.pdf

[12] Many definitions exist. As an example, in reference 11, scientific credibility is defined as the trust in and recognition of the expertise of a body by stakeholders, achieved by the body through, e.g., transparent practices and the production of reliable findings with high standards of scientific and technical integrity.

[13] Many definitions exist. In reference 11, policy relevance, or known as salience, is defined as carrying out work that is relevant to the needs of relevant stakeholders / target audience.

[14] Many definitions exist. As an example, in reference 11, political legitimacy is defined as having the support of stakeholders through their commitment to body's initiative by, e.g., being inclusive of all stakeholders and divergent views.

d. Each panel's institutional setup reflects the specific needs and conditions of its thematic cluster, such as existing multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), scientific maturity, and consensus at the time of its establishment or revision. While there is no universal model, panels can still learn from each other. The key is ensuring that the chosen structure effectively supports the panel's functions and mandate—following the principle of "form follows function."

13. It should further be noted that the following analysis provides a static snapshot of the panels at the time of this report. In practice, their structures and operations have evolved over time through trial and error, external reviews, and stakeholder feedback.

2.1 Scope/objective of the panel

14. A common approach to defining the scope of a science-policy panel is to establish its objective. Two crucial factors to consider are specificity and flexibility. Specificity provides clarity on the panel's reach and operations, but may limit flexibility. This is particularly relevant for long-term panels, as new issues may emerge that were not initially anticipated when setting the scope.

15. Existing science-policy panels balance specificity and flexibility by adopting a broad and thus flexible objective (see Table 1) while adding specificity through periodic multi-year work programmes (elaborated in Section 2.7.5 below). In short, through an open, transparent and inclusive process, these work programmes may provide a structured framework of (sub-)objectives and focus areas, guiding concrete activities as agreed by the governing bodies. They also allow for priority adjustments and the inclusion of emerging issues without renegotiating the overall scope. Balancing specificity and flexibility through this approach ensures adaptability, a key trait of an effective science-policy interface. Additionally, developing the work programme through an inclusive process can help ensure that the panel's efforts build upon and complement existing initiatives, while avoiding unnecessary duplication.

Table 1. Examples of the objectives of existing science-policy panels

	Objectives
IPCC	"to provide governments at all levels with scientific information that they can use to develop climate policies"[15]
IPBES	"to strengthen the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long-term human well-being and sustainable development"[16]
IRP	"to contribute to a better understanding of sustainable development from a natural resources perspective, providing science-based policy options on how to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation while enhancing human well-being"[17]

[15] https://www.ipcc.ch/about

[16] https://www.ipbes.net/resource-file/2675

[17] https://www.resourcepanel.org/sites/default/files/documents/document/media/policies_and_procedures_of_the_irp.pdf

16. While IPCC, IPBES and IRP all have broad objectives, a nuanced difference may be observed: IPCC's objective explicitly focuses on one-way communication from science to policy. In contrast, IPBES's and IRP's objectives implicitly support bi-directional communication between science and policy. For IPEA, the reference on "facilitat[ing] the generation and use of multisectoral, scientific evidence to support Member States in efforts to tackle antimicrobial resistance" in the 2024 Political Declaration on AMR implicitly suggests bi-directional communication between science and policy.

17. **Elements for further consideration and discussion:** Drawing from the experience of existing science-policy panels, an approach that combines a broad overarching objective—to allow for flexibility—with the development of a work programme through an open, transparent, and inclusive process to define the panel's specific work and activities, without duplicating existing initiatives, may be considered for IPEA. Considering the information presented and the agreed-upon language in the 2024 Political Declaration on AMR, the following draft broad objective may be considered for IPEA:

> The independent panel for evidence for action against antimicrobial resistance is to facilitate the generation and use of multisectoral, scientific evidence to support Member States in their efforts to tackle antimicrobial resistance, making use of existing resources and avoiding duplication of ongoing efforts.

2.2 Functions and outputs of the panel

18. As shown in Table 2, the panels have different functions and outputs. IPCC focuses on conducting scientific assessments to inform policymakers on climate change, producing various types of reports (i.e., global comprehensive ones, special reports on specific topics, and methodological ones) and their summaries/synthesis. In contrast, IPBES and IRP have broader functions and more varied outputs, in addition to the common assessment function.

19. IRP also includes the function to "inform international policy discourse and development on emerging challenges and opportunities." This is similar to the function of "undertaking horizon scanning to identify issues of relevance to policymakers and, where possible, proposing evidence-based options to address them" for a science-policy panel on chemicals, waste and pollution prevention, as recognized in United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) resolution 5/8.[18] Thus, hereafter this function is referred to as "horizon scanning."

20. IPBES additionally includes the function of "knowledge management" (function (b) of IPBES in Table 2), "policy support" (function (d) of IPBES in Table 2), and "capacity-building" (function (e) of IPBES in Table 2).

21. The functions and associated outputs are separately discussed below. Existing panels have established detailed procedures for preparing and adopting their outputs, as outlined in Table 10. Therefore, it is advisable to keep discussions on the functions and outputs of IPEA at a high level, providing guidance on expected achievements for each function, while leaving technical details to the development of specific procedures.

22. "**Assessment**" is a common function across science-policy panels. These assessments are extensive documents based on critical review and synthesis of publicly available sources

[18] https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3999276

including peer-reviewed literature, grey literature, and Indigenous and local knowledge. They empower evidence-based options for national decision-making and inform international processes such as the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (in the case of IPCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (in the case of IPBES).[19] Assessments include comprehensive (global and regional), thematic, and methodological types (see Table 2). They are often accompanied by a summary for policymakers, translating the assessment into an accessible format for policy- and decision-makers. These summaries are typically available in six UN languages. Additionally, assessments are sometimes accompanied by synthesis reports or technical summaries.

a. Comprehensive assessments are conducted cyclically (e.g., IPCC assessment reports,[20] IRP Global Resources Outlooks[21]), or on *ad hoc* basis (e.g., UNEP's Global Chemicals and Waste Management Outlooks). They are initiated through pre-defined mandates (e.g., IPCC), or prioritized in the programmes of work (e.g., IPBES, IRP), and typically take years to complete, varying by scale and procedures.

b. Assessments may also cover cross-cutting issues (e.g., scientific outcome of the IPBES-IPCC co-sponsored workshop on biodiversity and climate change[22]), special themes (e.g., IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C,[23] IPBES assessment on pollinators, pollination and food production,[24] or IRP Report on Governing Coastal Resources: Implications for a Sustainable Blue Economy[25]), and methods (e.g., 2027 IPCC Methodology Report on Inventories for Short-lived Climate Forcers,[26] IPBES Methodological Assessment of Scenarios and Models of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services[27], IRP's The Use of Natural Resources in the Economy: A Global Manual on Economy Wide Material Flow Accounting[28]).

c. Some science-policy panels also release other types of assessment outputs. For example, in 2022, IRP submitted a Think Piece "We need a Global Discussion on Natural Resource Management" to the public consultation by the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism to the United Nations Secretary General.[29]

23. "**Horizon scanning**" is a useful tool for systematically reviewing available data and information to detect, collect, and interpret signals of emerging and early changes in a specific field, which may be relevant for AMR. Many factors may lead to important opportunities for tackling AMR or significant risks of worsening AMR, and not all are currently known. As science and technology on AMR evolve rapidly, understanding these factors expands over time. Therefore, it would be key to identify early signals of emerging opportunities or significant risks at different sectors, levels and scales to inform policymakers and decision-makers. This

[19] For examples, see https://www.ipbes.net/impact-tracking-view
[20] https://www.ipcc.ch/reports/
[21] https://www.resourcepanel.org/reports/global-resources-outlook-2024
[22] https://www.ipbes.net/events/ipbes-ipcc-co-sponsored-workshop-biodiversity-and-climate-change
[23] https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/
[24] https://files.ipbes.net/ipbes-web-prod-public-files/spm_deliverable_3a_pollination_20170222.pdf
[25] https://www.resourcepanel.org/reports/governing-coastal-resources
[26] https://www.ipcc.ch/report/methodology-report-on-short-lived-climate-forcers/
[27] https://www.ipbes.net/scenarios-models
[28] https://www.resourcepanel.org/reports/global-manual-economy-wide-material-flow-accounting
[29] https://www.resourcepanel.org/reports/opinion-piece-we-need-global-discussion-natural-resource-management

may enable early warning of such risks and allow for timely actions to minimize risks and utilize opportunities. "Horizon scanning" may also help inform the development of work programmes, such as identifying areas where additional assessments may be needed.

24. "**Knowledge management**" may promote an integrated approach to identifying, capturing, evaluating, retrieving, and sharing knowledge and information. It supports the development of a panel's work by bringing knowledge gaps to the attention of the broader scientific community and other knowledge holders, while also enhancing the impact of the panel's work through targeted and strategic sharing. This function may contribute to providing up-to-date information, identifying key gaps in scientific research, encouraging communication between scientists and policymakers, disseminating findings for various audiences, raising public awareness, and facilitating information-sharing. This function may generate a wide range of outputs, including: information-sharing platforms (e.g., IRP Global Material Flows Database[30], United Nations Information Portal on Multilateral Environmental Agreements—InforMEA[31]), communities of practice as self-organizing groups of experts, policymakers and practitioners to increase access to expertise and information on a specific topic or focus area (e.g., IPBES[32]), various traditional and online outreach materials and activities to publicize the panel's findings (e.g., IPCC[33]), training tools and massive open online courses (e.g., IRP[34]).

25. "**Policy support**" utilizes tools and methodologies based on science and other knowledge systems, including Indigenous and local knowledge, to inform, assist and enhance relevant decisions, policy-making and implementation at the local, national, regional and international levels. IPBES has developed a set of tools and methodologies, covering assembling data and knowledge; assessment and evaluation; public discussion, involvement and participatory process; selection and design of policy instruments; implementation, outreach and enforcement; training and capacity building; and social learning, innovation and adaptive governance.[35]

26. "**Capacity-building**" is the process whereby people, organizations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt, and maintain capacity over time.[36] As such, capacity-building may take place at the individual, organizational and societal levels. Many science-policy panels have integrated capacity-building, even if it is not explicitly identified as a principal function in their initial mandate. It should be noted that they primarily focus on individual capacity and, in some cases organizational capacity, with common objectives to support the panel's core functions. They are not intended as broad capacity-building initiatives, but rather aim to enable the effective participation of current and future experts in the panel's work such as the preparation and review of assessments, and to enhance the uptake of the panel's outputs by policymakers and stakeholders. These activities are useful for the panel's effectiveness, especially for those experiencing high turnover of experts,[37] and potential impact and reach. Existing activities can be grouped into three broad categories.

[30] https://www.resourcepanel.org/global-material-flows-database
[31] https://www.informea.org/en
[32] https://www.ipbes.net/communities-practice
[33] https://www.ipcc.ch/outreach-material/
[34] https://www.resourcepanel.org/data-resources
[35] https://www.ipbes.net/policy-tools-methodologies
[36] United Nations Development Group, "Capacity development: UNDAF companion guidance".
[37] IPCC-LVII/INF.12; IPBES/7/INF/18

a. Activities that ensure effective participation of scientists and other stakeholders in the panel's assessment work, such as developing guidance documents,[38] webinars, e-learning courses,[39] and regional workshops.[40]

b. Activities that engage and enable young people and early-career professionals, such as webinars[41] and workshops,[42] fellowships that enable early-career individuals to work with and be mentored by leading experts in the panel's assessments.[43]

c. More broad-ranging means of developing the capacity of individuals and organizations in a general sense, such as developing and disseminating training materials based on the assessments,[44] building and supporting communities of practice, and promoting and facilitating national and regional branches.[45]

27. **Elements for further consideration and discussion**. Considering the information presented and the agreed-upon language in the 2024 Political Declaration on AMR that IPEA is "to facilitate the generation and use of multisectoral, scientific evidence to support Member States in efforts to tackle antimicrobial resistance," the following functions may be considered for IPEA as a starting point (noting that this list is non-exhaustive). It is suggested to evaluate the adequacy of each function, such as by outlining its expected outcomes, to determine whether it merits inclusion, and to consider the inclusion of additional functions as necessary.

a. Conducting various types of assessments on issues pertinent to antimicrobial resistance.
b. Implementing horizon scanning to identify emerging and potential issues, thereby informing policymakers and guiding the panel's programme of work.
c. Facilitating knowledge management to identify and highlight key research gaps and disseminate the panel's findings.
d. Providing policy support through the development of tools and methodologies based on the panel's work and findings.
e. Enhancing capacity-building efforts to support the effective participation of both current and future experts in panel's other core functions.

Similar to the approach taken with defining the scope and objectives, a model that combines broadly framed descriptions of functions to allow for flexibility, with the development of a work programme through an open, transparent, and inclusive process to define the panel's specific work and activities, may be considered for IPEA. In other words, the current articulation of functions is intended to create an enabling environment that allows the panel to engage in a broad range of activities. The specific areas of work would then be further defined through a participatory, transparent, and inclusive work programme development process, ensuring that the panel addresses priorities in a focused and targeted manner. Furthermore, more details on the outputs for individual functions may be further specified through the development

[38] https://www.ipcc.ch/how-to-participate-in-the-ipcc/; https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2017/08/Climate-Outreach-IPCC-communications-handbook.pdf; https://www.ipbes.net/modules-assessment-guide
[39] https://www.ipbes.net/module-2-ipbes-assessment-process
[40] https://ipbes.net/sites/default/files/ipbes-7-inf-7-add1_cb_rolling_plan.pdf
[41] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L5Ri4GBhcKk
[42] https://ipbes.net/ipbes-youth-workshop-2022
[43] https://ipbes.net/ipbes-fellowship-programme
[44] IPBES/7/INF/7/Add.1; https://www.resourcepanel.org/data-resources
[45] IPBES/7/INF/7

of general or specific procedures, policies, strategies, and/or guidance on the preparation and adoption of the panel's deliverables (see Section 2.7), prior to or after IPEA's establishment.

Table 2. Examples of the functions and outputs of existing science-policy panels

	Functions	**Outputs**
IPCC	"to assess on a comprehensive, objective, open and transparent basis the scientific, technical and socio-economic information relevant to understanding the scientific basis of risk of human-induced climate change, its potential impacts and options for adaptation and mitigation"[46]	Comprehensive assessment reports; Special reports on specific topics; Methodology reports that provide practical guidelines for the preparation of greenhouse gas inventories; Synthesis reports that integrate the assessment report and any special reports prepared during an assessment cycle[47]
IPBES	"(a) Focusing on Government needs and based on priorities established by the Plenary, the Platform **responds to requests from Governments**, including those conveyed to it by multilateral environmental agreements related to biodiversity and ecosystem services as determined by their respective governing bodies. The Plenary **welcomes inputs and suggestions from, and the participation of, United Nations bodies** related to biodiversity and ecosystem services as determined by their respective governing bodies. The Plenary also **encourages and takes into account, as appropriate, inputs and suggestions made by relevant stakeholders** […] (b) The Platform **identifies and prioritizes key scientific information needed for policymakers** at appropriate scales and **catalyses efforts to generate new knowledge** by engaging in dialogue with key scientific organizations, policymakers and funding organizations, but should not directly undertake new research; (c) The Platform performs **regular and timely assessments of knowledge** on biodiversity and ecosystem services and their interlinkages, which should include comprehensive global, regional and, as necessary, subregional assessments and thematic issues at appropriate scales and new topics identified by science and as decided upon by the Plenary […] The Platform maintains a catalogue of relevant assessments, identifies the need for regional and subregional assessments and helps to catalyse support for subregional and national assessments, as appropriate; (d) The Platform **supports policy formulation and implementation by identifying policy-relevant tools and methodologies**, such as those arising from assessments, to enable decision makers to gain access to those tools and methodologies and, where necessary, to promote and catalyse their further development;	Global, regional and subregional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services; Thematic or methodological assessments; Synthesis reports (that synthesize and integrate materials drawing from assessment reports); Summary of policymakers and technical summary (a longer detailed and specialized version of the material contained in the summary for policymakers); Technical papers (based on material contained in the assessment reports); Supporting material, including dialogue reports based on the material generate by discussions, reports and proceedings of workshops and expert meetings that are either commissioned or supported by the Platform, software or databases that facilitate the preparation or use of the Platform's reports, policy-relevant tools and methodologies that facilitate the preparation or use of the Platform's reports, guidance materials (guidance notes and guidance documents) that assist in the preparation of comprehensive and scientifically sound Platform reports and technical papers.[49]

[46] https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/09/ipcc-principles.pdf

[47] https://www.ipcc.ch/about/preparingreports/, and examples of the reports can be found at https://www.ipcc.ch/reports/

[49] https://www.ipbes.net/resource-file/4898

	(e) The Platform **prioritizes key capacity-building needs to improve the science-policy interface** at appropriate levels and then provides and calls for financial and other support for the highest-priority needs related directly to its activities, as decided by the Plenary, and catalyses financing for such capacity-building activities by providing a forum with conventional and potential sources of funding."[48]	
IRP	"to prepare independent, coherent and authoritative scientific studies and assessments of policy relevance on the sustainable use and management of natural resources and in particular their environmental impacts over the full life cycle, and to inform international policy discourse and development on emerging challenges and opportunities for the sustainable use and management of and equitable access to natural resources"[50]	Global assessment on natural resources use and management (including full report, summary for policymakers, and supporting materials such as dataset and case studies); Thematic study and assessment (including full report, summary for policymakers, supporting materials such as dataset and case studies, and technical summary if appropriate); Rapid study and assessment (including full report and summary for policymakers); Think piece (not a full study and assessment but science-based reflections);[51] Supporting material (e.g., reports from IRP meetings or events, software or databases linked to IRP scientific studies and assessments, guidance materials such as glossaries and guidance notes to assist in the preparation of IRP scientific studies and assessments, e-learning courses)[52]

[48] https://www.ipbes.net/resource-file/2675

[50] https://www.resourcepanel.org/sites/default/files/documents/document/media/policies_and_procedures_of_the_irp.pdf

[51] Examples of various types of assessments and reports can be found at https://www.resourcepanel.org/reports

[52] Examples can be found at https://www.resourcepanel.org/data-resources

2.3 Institutional arrangements of the panel

28. Institutional arrangements set out the architecture required for a panel to operate and deliver on its functions (i.e., "forms" follow "functions"). The institutional arrangements of existing science-policy panels are outlined in Table 3. Despite varying names, the organizational structure typically includes the following components, either permanently or on an ad hoc basis:

    a. Membership
    b. A governing body that makes decisions
    c. One or more subsidiary bodies providing administrative and scientific oversight
    d. One or more subsidiary bodies undertaking the panel's work
    e. A secretariat.

29. The independent nature of IPEA mandated by the 2024 Political Declaration on AMR entails that the panel will establish its own institutional arrangements. As food for thought, the sub-sections below further discuss these individual elements, taking into account their composition (i.e., who is engaged in the individual body), functions (i.e., what the body will deliver), and modalities of work (i.e., how the body undertakes its work) where relevant.

2.3.1 Membership of the panel

30. Before detailing the institutional arrangement, it is key to understand the panel's membership, starting with the nature of its membership, being intergovernmental or non-governmental. This is because the success of a science-policy panel largely depends on the uptake by the target policy arena, whose participants are the primary "customers" of the panel's outputs.[53] This consideration is also closely linked to the composition and role of the governing body (typically, the governing body is composed of panel members), as discussed in Section 2.3.2.

31. An intergovernmental panel, with its membership comprising national governments (and regional economic integration organizations, REIOs), may effectively include key primary customers of the outputs—Member States as highlighted by the 2024 Political Declaration. Previous lessons learned show that such a panel may be most relevant to national and international policymaking needs, with some governments perceiving its outputs as more legitimate due to their involvement in the production process.[54]

32. In addition to its membership nature, the membership size, i.e., the number of participants routinely involved in the panel's work, is a significant design choice. It may have far-reaching implications for cost-effectiveness and the representativeness of the membership across various dimensions (e.g., geographic, gender, disciplinary expertise).[54]

33. As outlined in Table 3, all reviewed science-policy panels are intergovernmental in nature, though they vary in membership size. The IPCC has universal membership as defined in its Principles Governing IPCC Work, while IPBES and IRP require countries to express interest before becoming members, and IRP additionally includes REIOs in its membership. These panels also allow broad stakeholder participation as observers and beyond, to garner additional support in its work and ensure the buy-in of their outputs, albeit in varied forms. Further details on the arrangements of stakeholder relationships are elaborated in Section 2.4 below.

[53] https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/33808/OSSP.pdf

34. **Elements for further consideration and discussion.** Considering the information presented and the agreed-upon language in the 2024 Political Declaration on AMR, which states that IPEA is "to support Member States in efforts to tackle antimicrobial resistance," establishing IPEA with national governments as its core members may be one possible starting point for consideration, among other potential memberships. Additionally, it is suggested to consider whether or not to include REIOs in its membership. Further consideration should also be given to the potential roles and contributions of relevant non-state stakeholders in this panel, as part of the panel's membership, through structured stakeholder relationship mechanisms as discussed in Section 2.4, or a combination of both.

2.3.2 Governing body

35. Establishing a governing body is pertinent for IPEA, as the 2024 Political Declaration on AMR defines IPEA as an independent panel, i.e., with its own governance structure rather than being a subsidiary body to another institution.

36. **Composition.** The governing body of a science-policy panel typically reflects the panel's membership, with additional considerations as needed. For instance, the IRP employs a selection process for governmental members of its governing body, the Steering Committee, and includes its host institution, UNEP, in the Steering Committee (see Table 3). In addition, while not being official members of the governing bodies, existing science-policy panels typically allow a broad range of stakeholders to participate in the meetings of the governing body as observers (see Table 3). This inclusion enhances transparency, legitimacy, relevance, coordination, and cooperation. Further details on stakeholder participation as observers, along with other means of participation, are provided in Section 2.4 below. The composition of the governing body may have significant implications for budgetary commitments, particularly with regard to the provision of travel support for in-person meetings.

37. **Functions.** While using languages of varying complexities, the governing bodies of the reviewed science-policy panels share several core functions that provide oversight of the panel's operations, ensuring its policy relevance, legitimacy, and accountability (Table 4). These functions include deciding on

    a. the budget and work programme of the panel,
    b. the outputs, including their scope and processes,
    c. the rules and procedures of the panel, and
    d. the institutional arrangements, including establishment and modification of subsidiary bodies and election of officers.

38. Additionally, IPBES's governing body has a unique function on determining the effectiveness evaluation process, reflecting the inclusion of effectiveness evaluation in its founding document, which is not the case for the other two panels (see Section 2.5 below). IRP's governing body also has additional functions related to the follow-up activities of IRP's outputs to enhance outreach and impact. In contrast, such functions are considered part of the general functions or activities of the panel in the cases of the IPCC (communication) and IPBES (communication, policy support, and capacity building), rather than specific functions of the governing body.

39. **Modalities of work.** The governing bodies of the reviewed science-policy panels share similar modalities of work, making decisions through meetings, though with varying frequencies, means of participation (online vs. in-person) and observer participation (see Table 3 and Section 2.4 below). It is important to note potential trade-offs caused by different modalities of work on budgetary commitments, as well as the pace and scale of the panel's work.

40. For instance, limiting the frequency of governing body meetings could delay the adoption or endorsement of outputs by subsidiary bodies. This concern may also apply to interim steps in preparing outputs. However, this can be mitigated by delegating the oversight to the subsidiary bodies providing administrative and scientific oversight (see Sub-Section C below) or holding online meetings, as done by the IRP governing body (see Table 3), though it is important to note the limitations of online meetings, particularly regarding equal participation across regions.

41. The provision of simultaneous interpretation at meetings illustrates another potential trade-off. While the cost of interpretation can be significant, its availability greatly enhances transparency and legitimacy. Modalities for observer participation in governing body meetings are also crucial for delivering credible and legitimate outputs that are policy-relevant without being policy-prescriptive. These modalities support inclusive participation and coordination with existing intergovernmental bodies and science-policy panels.

42. **Elements for further consideration and discussion.** The following questions may be considered when designing and establishing IPEA's governing body to foster the panel's policy relevance, legitimacy, transparency, accountability, and inclusiveness, taking into account other factors such as budget commitments.

    a. **Composition:**
        i. Will the governing body consist of all, or selected representatives of, national governments that are members of the panel?

        ii. Will it additionally include REIOs, Quadripartite organizations, and/or other non-state actors?

    b. **Functions:**
        i. Will it focus on common functions such as the oversight of the budget and work programme of the panel, the outputs (including their scope and processes), the rules and procedures of the panel, and the institutional arrangements (including the establishment and modification of subsidiary bodies and the election of officers)?

        ii. Will additional functions be included, e.g., establishing regular channels for information exchange and coordination with existing structures and processes such as the Global Leaders Group (GLG) on AMR, the AMR Multistakeholder Partnership Platform, and Ministerial Meetings on AMR to enhance alignment and coherence across efforts?

        iii. Can some common functions be delegated to those subsidiary bodies providing administrative and scientific oversight (which may, e.g., potentially reduce the frequency of in-person meetings), similar to examples in the next Section?

c. **Modalities of Work:**

i. What will be the frequencies and means of participation in the governing body's meetings for decision-making?

ii. Will a broad range of stakeholders be allowed to join the governing body's meetings, as observers?

The answers to these questions will not only determine the approaches to the most suitable institutional arrangements for establishing IPEA, but also aid in the preparation of the Rules of Procedure for the panel's operations, e.g., rules for stakeholder participation as observers if they would be allowed (see Section 2.7 below).

2.3.3 Subsidiary bodies providing administrative and scientific oversight

43. Most science-policy panels have dedicated subsidiary bodies to provide administrative and scientific oversight of the panel's day-to-day operations (hereafter referred to as "oversight bodies"). These bodies play a key supporting role to the governing body, particularly during the intersessional periods between its formal meetings. IRP takes a different approach to maintain a leaner structure for the panel. Instead of establishing dedicated oversight bodies, it delegates administrative and scientific oversight to its subsidiary body undertaking the panel's work, particularly its co-chairs, and its secretariat (see Table 3,
44.
45. Table ***6*** and
46. Table *7*). IPCC has a single body for combined oversight, while IPBES has separate bodies for administrative and scientific oversight.

47. Whether combined or separate, these oversight bodies share a similar set of administrative and scientific oversight functions (see
48.
49. Table ***6***), with some variations in details. For example, the IPCC Bureau explicitly participates in error responses, a function not explicitly mentioned for IPBES and IRP. Functions of these bodies reflect the panel's operations and may evolve with new work processes and procedures. In some instances, oversight bodies may assume functions delegated by the governing body. For example, IRP's co-chairs can approve certain scientific or technical outputs (see
50.
51. Table ***6***), a role typically handled by the governing bodies in the case of IPCC and IPBES (see Section 2.3.2 below).

52. Both approaches to oversight have pros and cons. A single oversight body may enhance coordination and coherence, especially when decisions on scientific issues may impact administrative ones. In contrast, separate oversight bodies allow for targeted responsibilities and flexibility, differentiating the expertise and membership needs: e.g., an administrative oversight body may prioritize regional representation, while a scientific oversight body may focus on interdisciplinarity and inclusiveness. Meanwhile, coordination between the bodies can be improved by providing for administrative oversight body members to observe scientific oversight body's meetings, or vice versa.

53. It is common for science-policy panels to let their oversight bod(ies) establish their own modalities of work, while certain general considerations can be included in the institutional arrangements for establishing the panel, including the compositions and functions.

54. **Elements for further consideration and discussion.** The following considerations and questions may be taken into account when designing and establishing administrative and scientific oversight subsidiary bod(ies) to support IPEA's effective and efficient operation.

    a. **Composition:**
        i. It may be beneficial to have two separate bodies for administrative and scientific oversight, each with distinct expertise and membership.

        ii. Members of the administrative oversight body (e.g., a Bureau) may be nominated by regions and elected by the governing body, ensuring geographical, regional, and gender balance. They may be selected for their subject matter expertise and experience with intergovernmental processes.

        iii. Members of the scientific oversight body (e.g., a multidisciplinary expert panel) may be nominated by regions and elected by the governing body, ensuring a broad range of disciplinary expertise along with sectoral, geographical, regional, and gender balance. They may be selected for their scientific, technical, or policy expertise and knowledge of IPEA's scope and work.

        iv. The number of members for each oversight body can vary. How many would be for IPEA's oversight bodies (e.g., 10 and 25 members, respectively)?

    b. **Functions:**
        i. Will it conduct similar oversight functions as those under IPCC and IPBES? Additionally, will it assume some functions delegated by the governing body, such as approving certain scientific or technical outputs?

    c. **Modalities of work:** Details may be determined by the oversight body or bodies later.

    The decisions made here will not only determine the approaches to the most suitable institutional arrangements for establishing IPEA, but also aid in the preparation of the Rules of Procedure for the panel's operations, e.g., rules on the nomination and selection of oversight body members (see Section 2.3.3 below).

2.3.4 Subsidiary bodies undertaking the panel's work

55. IPCC, IPBES and IRP represent three approaches to establishing subsidiary bodies undertaking the panel's work (hereafter referred to as "work bodies") that are responsible for carrying out the panel's functions and the work programme, including specific activities such as conducting assessments (see Table 3 and Table 6). IPBES has its work bodies formed on an *ad hoc* basis, in response to tasks defined by the programme of work and having members of the work bodies selected through a nomination and selection process. In contrast, IRP has a standing work body of 35–40 scientists, supplemented by ad hoc working groups that include both these standing scientists and external experts. IPCC falls in between, with several standing work bodies focused on predefined topics (though their exact terms of reference are subject to adjustments in each assessment cycle); these standing bodies undergo an expert nomination and selection process for each assessment cycle and are complemented by *ad hoc* working bodies.

56. Each approach has its advantages and disadvantages. Standing work bodies with fixed-term scientists can expedite work by reducing the time needed to agree on terms of reference and complete the nomination and selection process. However, this approach may lack agility for addressing complex and evolving issues, where emerging and new fields may be constantly identified and need attention. Additionally, maintaining a manageable size for a standing body with fixed-term scientists can be challenging when dealing with complex issues that require input and insights from diverse natural and social disciplines, various ways of knowing (e.g., Indigenous, traditional, and local knowledge), and different geographical perspectives.

57. Regardless standing or ad hoc, a work body typically has detailed terms of reference outlining its composition, modalities, and functions (see Table 6 and its footnotes for examples). The composition usually reflects the expertise and needs dictated by its mandates (i.e., functions) and often includes key features of inclusiveness and balance (geographical, regional, gender, etc.). There can be significant variety in the size of these bodies and their modalities of work. Larger bodies can better satisfy balance and inclusiveness but are more time- and cost-intensive to convene and manage. The nature of the work and the time required for best practices (e.g., adequate review time) are crucial in determining the frequency and mode of meetings. Decisions on how work bodies will be established and their work modalities will have budgetary implications, while some aspects such as the compositions, functions and modalities of work for individual work bodies may be rather addressed when establishing these bodies.

58. **Elements for further consideration and discussion.** Given the complex and evolving nature of AMR issues, it may be beneficial to establish work bodies under IPEA on an *ad hoc* basis, tailored to the needs of the work programme. The detailed composition, functions, and modalities of these bodies can be defined when they are established. Notably, the IPBES has bracketed provisions for working groups in its founding documents, which has not hindered its key work. Therefore, minimal or no provisions for work bodies may be needed in the key elements of institutional arrangements for the establishment of IPEA, while having concrete rules in the Rules of Procedure allowing for establishing work bodies (see Section 2.7.2 below).

2.3.5 Secretariat

59. A secretariat is an essential part of the panel's operations, including providing targeted support for other bodies established under the panel.

60. A key consideration for the secretariat's composition is determining its hosting arrangements, particularly whether it will be hosted by one or more intergovernmental organizations (see Table 3). Hosting by existing intergovernmental organizations is beneficial as it allows the panel to leverage the existing infrastructure, such as financial rules, and access the expertise, engaged stakeholders, and networks of the host organizations. Meanwhile, hosting by existing intergovernmental organizations should not be confused with the panel becoming a subsidiary body of those organizations, as the panel can remain independent with its own governing body. For example, IPBES is an independent body outside the UN, while being hosted by UNEP.[54]

61. Existing panels point to different hosting arrangements with intergovernmental organizations (see Table 3). IRP is solely hosted and supported by UNEP. In contrast, IPCC and IPBES have multiple intergovernmental organizations involved. IPCC is co-hosted by both WMO and

[54] https://www.ipbes.net/about

UNEP, with the secretariat physically hosted at WMO and UNEP senior staff represented in the secretariat. IPBES has its secretariat hosted by UNEP with sole accountability, but supported by UNESCO, FAO, and UNDP through collaborative partnership agreements.[55] The example of IPBES demonstrates that choosing any hosting approach does not prevent a science-policy panel from establishing special relationships or partnerships with other intergovernmental organizations (for more details, see Section 2.4 below).

62. Another important element, in addition to intergovernmental organization participation, is the possibility of establishing technical support units or not (see Table 3). Both IPCC and IPBES include technical support units in their secretariat arrangements to provide administrative and scientific support to specific work bodies. These units are typically hosted by a government, e.g., through a regulatory or scientific institution in the country. Staff of the technical support units are employed by the host institution, making them an effective means of providing in-kind support for the panel's work. If technical support units, in addition to the core secretariat, are involved in providing secretariat arrangements for the panel, it is crucial to clarify their work responsibilities and develop strategies to ensure coordination, typically through the terms of reference (see
63. Table *7*).

64. Regardless of the hosting arrangements, existing science-policy panels share a similar set of functions performed by the secretariat, with some differences in details (see
65. Table *7*). These functions typically include: implementing the programme of work, handling budget and contractual issues, organizing meetings for the panel and its subsidiary bodies, implementing specific functions/activities of the panel (e.g., Conflict-of-Interest policies), and information-sharing and serving as the point of contact for external parties.

66. Most of these functions are administrative or technical support in nature. However, the IRP secretariat also explicitly engages in more scientific work, such as drafting the work programme and preparing summaries for policymakers, in consultation with other subsidiary bodies. This arrangement can be beneficial, particularly for maintaining institutional knowledge on scientific and technical matters related to the panel's operation, while allowing for more frequent member rotations of the oversight and work bodies, enhancing their inclusiveness, legitimacy, and other important characteristics. Meanwhile, although the secretariats of IPCC and IPBES do not explicitly list such scientific work in their functions, it does not necessarily prevent them from undertaking it. For example, the IPCC Secretariat has a provision to undertake any tasks required to support its mandate, providing flexibility to the secretariat's functions (see
67. Table *7*). Therefore, it is worth considering how specific the secretariat's functions need to be.

68. **Elements for further consideration and discussion.** The following considerations and questions may be taken into account when designing and establishing a secretariat to support IPEA's effective and efficient operation.

    a. **Composition:**
        i. Should the secretariat be co-hosted by the Quadripartite organizations, or should it be hosted by one of the Quadripartite organizations with sole accountability and supported by the other organizations?

[55] https://www.ipbes.net/collaborative-partnership

ii. What should be the criteria to define the physical location be (e.g., through a solicitation of proposals from Member States or subject to the (co-)hosting Quadripartite organization or organizations)?

iii. Will it be possible to establish (ad hoc) technical support units (e.g., through selected hosting offers by governments or stakeholders) to complement the core secretariat to provide administrative and scientific support to specific work bodies?

b. **Functions:**

i. Will it conduct similar administrative and technical support functions as those under existing science-policy panels, i.e., implementing the programme of work, handling budget and contractual issues, organizing meetings for the panel and its subsidiary bodies, implementing specific functions/activities of the panel (e.g., Conflict-of-Interest policies), and information-sharing and serving as the point of contact for external parties?

ii. Will it also conduct (some of) the scientific functions as those under IRP?

iii. How detailed should these functions be explicitly stated?

c. **Modalities of work:** Details may be determined by the secretariat itself later, in consultation with the governing body and other subsidiary bodies.

Table 3. Examples of the organizational structure and membership of existing science-policy panels. Given the varied terminology used by different panels, it is important to focus on the composition and functions of each component or subsidiary body rather than their names.

IPCC[56]	IPBES[57]	IRP[58]
It consists of five permanent components • **Plenary:** the Governing body, consisting of States, which are Members of the World Meteorological Organization and/or the United Nations (currently 195). • **Bureau:** comprising the IPCC Chair and Vice-Chairs, the Co-Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Working Groups, the Co-Chairs of the Task Force,[59] and the members of the Working Group Bureaus (currently 34 members), providing guidance on the scientific and technical aspects of assessments and gives advice on management and strategic issues. • **Executive Committee:** comprising the IPCC Chair and Vice-Chairs, the Co-Chairs of the three Working Groups and the Task Force, and the Head of Secretariat and the heads of the Technical Support Units (advisory role), to strengthen and facilitate timely and effective implementation of the IPCC Programme of Work. • **Working Groups and others:** the three working groups and Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories, Task Group on Data Support for Climate Change Assessments, Gender Action Team, and Conflict-of-Interest Committee. • **Secretariat:** hosted by WMO and supported by UNEP, coordinating and assisting IPCC's work, including various Technical Support Units (hosted by different countries). Also, *ad hoc* or informal groups have been established.	It consists of four permanent components: • **Plenary**: the Governing body, consisting of States of the United Nations who are members to IPBES. • **Bureau:** 10 representatives from the five United Nations regions proposed by Governments for nomination by regions and election by the Plenary, overseeing the administrative matters. • **Multidisciplinary Expert Panel:** 25 representatives nominated by the five United Nations regions, carrying out the scientific and technical oversight. • **Secretariat:** hosted by UNEP with sole accountability and supported by UNESCO, FAO and UNDP,[60] including various Technical Support Units (hosted by different countries), having administrative functions under the direction of the Plenary. Additionally, IPBES may establish **subsidiary bodies such as expert groups and task forces**,[61] including the Conflict-of-Interest Committee, to carry out such objectives as may be agreed upon at a session of the Plenary.	It consists of three permanent components: • **Steering Committee:** the Governing body, consisting of governmental representatives of Member States of the United Nations (currently 28), Regional Economic Integration Organizations (currently the European Commission), and UNEP, providing strategic policy guidance to enhance policy relevance and impact of the IRP's work and promotes IRP. • **Panel:** the scientific body composed of a group of 35 to 40 eminent scientists and experts, with the main responsibility to undertake the development of scientific studies and assessments. • **Secretariat**: hosted by UNEP, with its main responsibility to provide substantive, technical and logistic support to the Panel and Steering Committee. Additionally, **IRP Working groups**, consisting of Panel members and external experts, may be created to develop scientific studies and assessments for consideration and approval by the Panel.

[56] https://www.ipcc.ch/documentation/procedures/; https://www.ipcc.ch/data/; https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/ipcc-principles-elections-rules.pdf

[57] https://www.ipbes.net/resource-file/2675; https://www.ipbes.net/resource-file/5374; https://www.ipbes.net/resource-file/4904

[58] https://www.resourcepanel.org/sites/default/files/documents/document/media/policies_and_procedures_of_the_irp.pdf; https://www.resourcepanel.org/partners

[59] The Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (TFI) has its own Task Force Bureau (TFB) composed of 12 members and the two Co-Chairs of the TFI.

[60] Decision IPBES/1/4, Decision IPBES/2/8

[61] https://www.ipbes.net/scenarios-models-task-force-members/ipbes10-13; https://www.ipbes.net/indigenous-local-knowledge/ipbes10-13

IPCC Membership	IPBES Membership	IRP Membership
All States, which are Members of the World Meteorological Organization and/or the United Nations, i.e., universal membership	IPBES is open to States Members of the United Nations, who may become members by expressing their intent to do so.	Representatives from governments of Member States of the United Nations and Regional Economic Integration Organizations are invited to express interest in joining the IRP Steering Committee at any time, following a selection process.
Decision-making mechanisms Representatives of IPCC member governments meet one or more times a year in Plenary Sessions of the Panel, taking decisions on matters of substance or procedure.	**Decision-making mechanisms** IPBES convenes regular sessions, with the venue and dates of each session are to be decided by the Plenary at the preceding session (if this is not possible, it should be decided by the Bureau), taking decisions on matters of substance or procedure.	**Decision-making mechanisms** IRP convenes **biannual meetings** to review progress of work, review and approve drafts of scientific studies and assessments, as well as discuss and agree on IRP strategic and operational issues. IRP may also carry out online review and approval of scientific studies and assessments.
Stakeholder participation • **Observers:** Any non-profit body or agency qualified in matters covered by the IPCC, whether national or international, governmental or intergovernmental, may be admitted as an IPCC Observer Organization. UN bodies and organizations are admitted as observers if they so request, and organizations with an existing observer status with the WMO or the UN may be considered as observers of the IPCC, subject to acceptance by the Panel. Representatives of observer organizations may attend sessions of the IPCC and the plenary sessions of the IPCC Working Groups.	**Stakeholder participation** • **Observers:** Any State not a member of the Platform, any UN body and any other body, organization or agency, whether national or international, governmental, intergovernmental or nongovernmental, [including any organization of][accredited representative of] Indigenous Peoples and local communities, which is qualified in matters covered by the Platform, and which has informed the secretariat of the Platform of its wish to be represented at sessions of the Plenary, may participate in the Platform as an observer. • **Strategic partnerships:** collaborative partnership arrangements between the Plenary and UNEP, UNESCO, FAO and UNDP; memoranda of cooperation/understanding between the secretariats of IPBES and multiple MEAs such as CBD, CMS, CITES, Ramsar and UNCCD and International NGOs such as Future Earth and IUCN.	**Stakeholder participation** • **Observers:** the secretariat may invite an individual or body, whether national or international, governmental or non-governmental, qualified in the topics covered by IRP, to participate in IRP biannual meetings as observers. • **Strategic partners:** entities that are active and qualified in the topics covered by IRP, including UN agencies, international, regional and national organizations, intergovernmental bodies, non-governmental organizations, private and public institutions, business and industry associations, research centers, universities, foundations, science-policy platforms. They contribute to IRP, e.g., by supporting in the development and dissemination of IRP publications, enhancing its policy and academic impact, and creating synergies with other stakeholders.

Table 4. Examples of the Governing Body's functions of existing science-policy panels

IPCC[62]	IPBES[63]	IRP[64]
to decide on	(a) Acting as the Platform's decision-making body.	-
Related to the budget and work programme (a) the organization's budget and work programme.	(b) Responding to requests from Governments, including those conveyed to it by multilateral environmental agreements related to biodiversity and ecosystem services as determined by their respective governing bodies. (c) Welcoming inputs and suggestions from, and the participation of, United Nations bodies related to biodiversity and ecosystem services as determined by their respective governing bodies. (d) Encouraging and taking into account, as appropriate, inputs and suggestions made by relevant stakeholders, such as other intergovernmental organizations, international and regional scientific organizations, environmental trust funds, non-governmental organizations, indigenous peoples and local communities and the private sector. (e) Approving a budget and overseeing the allocation of the trust fund. (f) Adopting a programme of work for the Platform, including on knowledge generation, assessments, policy support and capacity-building.	(a) Provide input and recommendations for the strategic planning exercise and review and approve the Work Programme including the strategic direction and priorities for the corresponding work cycle. (b) Request the preparation of scientific studies and assessments that are not included in the Work Programme. (c) Consider and approve the requests for IRP scientific studies and assessments from intergovernmental bodies and other institutions, based on the strategic direction, technical capability and available resources. (d) Endorse the IRP budget and provide recommendations for the mobilization of resources.
Related to the outputs (b) the scope and outline of its reports. (c) approval and adoption of IPCC reports	(g) Setting up a transparent peer review process for the production of reports by the Platform. (h) Deciding on a process for defining the scope of reports and for the adoption or approval of any reports produced by the Platform (following agreement on the work programme).	(e) Review the policy relevance and approve the terms of reference of IRP scientific studies and assessments. (f) Provide input and recommendations to the Panel on the policy relevance of scientific studies and assessments. (g) Provide input and recommendations for the development of the summary for policymakers of scientific studies and assessments.

[62] https://www.ipcc.ch/documentation/procedures/

[63] https://www.ipbes.net/resource-file/2675: please note that the sequences here are re-ordered to align with similar functions under the IPCC.

[64] https://www.resourcepanel.org/sites/default/files/documents/document/media/policies_and_procedures_of_the_irp.pdf: please note that the sequences here are re-ordered to align with similar functions under the IPCC.

Related to the rules and procedures (d) issues related to principles and procedures of the IPCC.	(e) Ensuring the active and efficient participation of civil society in the Plenary. (n) Adopting and amending rules of procedures and financial rules.	(h) Review and approve the IRP Policies and Procedures and their amendments.
Related to the institutional arrangements (e) the structure and mandate of IPCC Working Groups and Task Forces (f) election of the IPCC Chair, other members of the IPCC Bureau and the Task Force Bureau	(k) Establishing subsidiary bodies and working groups as appropriate. (f) Selecting one Chair and four Vice-Chairs, taking due account of the principle of geographical balance among the five United Nations regions, based on criteria, a nomination process and length of service to be decided by the Plenary. (g) Selecting members of any subsidiary body, taking due account of the principle of geographical balance among the five United Nations regions, based on criteria, a nomination process and length of service to be decided by the Plenary.	(i) Recommend potential Working Group members, Panel members, Panel Co-Chairs, Review Editors and Expert Reviewers (as defined in paragraph 73(d) of these procedures) in line with the principle described in paragraph 4(b). (j) Recommend, review and appoint Steering Committee members, Panel and Steering Committee Co-Chairs.
-	***Related to the evaluation*** (i) Deciding on an evaluation process for independently reviewing the Platform's efficiency and effectiveness on a periodic basis.	-
-		***Related to the follow-ups of the outputs*** (k) Provide input and recommendations for the dissemination of scientific studies and assessments to enhance impact on policy-making processes. (l) Advocate for the work of the IRP and actively support the IRP to reach out and inform their constituencies and networks through, alias, the translation of scientific studies and assessments, organization of dedicated national or regional launches and special events, and the communication of IRP messages to national or regional policy-makers and initiatives. (m) Extend the findings and methodologies of scientific studies and assessments to the local level by initiating or facilitating national or regional scientific studies and assessments. (n) Propose capacity development activities at the national or regional level based on IRP scientific studies and assessments.

Table 5. Examples of the functions of subsidiary bodies providing administrative and scientific oversight of existing science-policy panels

IPCC[65]	IPBES[66]	IRP
Administrative oversight		
Bureau a) Advising the Panel on the Work Programme of the IPCC and the coordination of work between the Working Groups. b) Overseeing implementation of the communication strategy in respect of the activities of IPCC Bureau members. c) Advising progress in and coordination of the work of the IPCC. d) Advising the conduct of the Sessions of the Panel. e) Reviewing requests for admission as observer organizations. f) Advising the application of the Principles and Procedures of the IPCC. g) Overseeing the work of any technical task groups (e.g. TGICA). **Executive Committee** h) Addressing urgent issues related to IPCC Products and Programme of Work that require prompt attention by the IPCC between Panel sessions. i) Undertaking communication and outreach activities, in accordance with the IPCC Communication Strategy. j) Strengthening coordination between Working Groups and Task Forces on activities and issues pertaining to the production of assessments and other relevant IPCC products.	**Bureau** (a) Addressing requests related to the Platform's programme of work and products that require attention by the Platform between sessions of the Plenary. (b) Overseeing communication and outreach activities. (c) Reviewing progress in the implementation of decisions of the Plenary, if so directed by the Plenary. (d) Monitoring the secretariat's performance. (e) Organizing and helping to conduct the sessions of the Plenary. (f) Reviewing the observance of the Platform's rules and procedures. (g) Reviewing the management of resources and observance of financial rules and reporting thereon to the Plenary. (h) Advising the Plenary on coordination between the Platform and other relevant institutions. (i) Identifying donors and developing partnership arrangements for the implementation of the Platform's activities.	No specific subsidiary bodies providing administrative and scientific oversight, but delegated to bodies that undertake the panel's work (see Table ***6***).

[65] https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/TOR_Bureau.pdf

[66] https://www.ipbes.net/resource-file/2675; please note that the sequences here are re-ordered to align with similar functions under the IPCC.

Scientific oversight		
Bureau a) Advising scientific and technical aspects of the IPCC's Programme of Work. b) Advising technical or scientific communications matters. c) developing and agreeing the list of authors, review editors and expert reviewers, taking into account the balance of expertise, geographical coverage and gender. d) overseeing scientific quality. e) engaging with the wider scientific community, both globally and regionally. f) providing guidance on cross-cutting scientific issues related to the drafting of reports. g) participating in the response to possible errors, as described in the "IPCC Protocol for Addressing Possible Errors in IPCC Assessment Reports, Synthesis Reports, Special Reports or Methodology Reports. h) functioning in the role of an Editorial Board in finalizing Technical Papers as defined in Section 5 of Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work. **Executive Committee** a) Overseeing the response to possible errors in completed assessments and other IPCC products, in accordance with the "IPCC Protocol for Addressing Possible Errors in IPCC Assessment Reports, Synthesis Reports, Special Reports or Methodology Reports".	**Multidisciplinary Expert Panel** (a) Providing advice to the Plenary 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 to ensure the highest levels of scientific quality, independence and credibility for all products delivered by the Platform at all stages of the process. (d) Engaging the scientific community and other knowledge holders with the work programme, taking into account the need for different disciplines and types of knowledge, gender balance, and effective contribution and participation by experts from developing countries. (e) Assuring scientific and technical coordination among structures set up under the Platform and facilitating coordination between the Platform and other related processes to build upon existing efforts. (f) [Exploring approaches to facilitating the sharing and transfer of technology in the context of assessment, knowledge generation and capacity-building according to the work programme of the Platform]. (g) Exploring ways and means to bring different knowledge systems, including indigenous knowledge systems, into the science-policy interface.	

Table 6. Examples of the functions of subsidiary bodies undertaking the panel's work of existing science-policy panels. Text in italic indicates functions typically associated with providing administrative and scientific oversight, i.e., those more closely related to Table 5 above.

IPCC[67]	IPBES[68]	IRP[69]
In *Principles Governing IPCC Work* 6. IPCC Working Groups and any Task Forces constituted by the IPCC shall have clearly defined and approved mandates and work plans as established by the Panel, and shall be open-ended. **Example** An example of the terms of reference can be found for the Task Group on Data Support for Climate Change Assessments (TG-Data).[70]	The entire text describing "working groups", including their functions in the *Functions, Operating Principles, and Institutional Arrangements of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Service* is bracketed. **Examples** Examples of the terms of reference can be found for task forces for the rolling work programme up to 2030,[71] and the task force on capacity-building.[72]	**Role of panel members** (a) Carry out scientific scoping work for the strategic planning exercise and contribute to the development of the Work Programme. (b) Prepare, review and *approve* the terms of reference of scientific studies and assessments. (c) Undertake scientific studies and assessments as a Lead Author, Contributing Author or Review Editor. (d) Prepare, review and *approve* First and Second Drafts of scientific studies and assessments. (e) Report on progress of scientific studies and assessments to the IRP at its biannual meetings or electronically as appropriate. (f) Participate in and actively contribute to Panel meetings. (g) Recommend candidates for Panel members, Panel Co-Chairs, Working Group members, Review Editors and Expert Reviewers (as defined in paragraph 73(d) of these procedures). (h) Participate in the Group of Scientific Reviewers for the appointment of new Panel members and renewal of existing ones. (i) Actively contribute to the involvement of public and private stakeholders as well as to the communication and

[67] https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/09/ipcc-principles.pdf; https://www.ipcc.ch/working-groups/; https://www.ipcc.ch/about/task-groups/

[68] https://www.ipbes.net/resource-file/2675

[69] https://www.resourcepanel.org/sites/default/files/documents/document/media/policies_and_procedures_of_the_irp.pdf

[70] https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2020/10/TG-Data_TORs.pdf

[71] https://files.ipbes.net/ipbes-web-prod-public-files/tor_policy_20190508.pdf

[72] https://www.ipbes.net/resource-file/19138

		dissemination of scientific studies and assessments; and advocate for the work of the IRP. **Role of panel co-chairs** (a) *Provide strategic, substantive and political guidance to the IRP to ensure impact of IRP scientific studies and assessments.* (b) *Ensure the observance of IRP Policies and Procedures, in particular the principles included in Section I of these procedures.* (c) Chair Panel and Joint sessions of IRP biannual meetings to ensure smooth and productive deliberation. (d) As part of the Group of Scientific Reviewers, review applications to Panel membership, develop shortlist of candidates and provide recommendations on potential new Panel members and renewal of current Panel members. (e) Select and replace Lead Authors, Review Editors and Expert Reviewers (as defined in paragraph 73(d) of these procedures). (f) Review and *approve* IRP Think Pieces. (g) Actively contribute to the dissemination of scientific studies and assessments and advocate for the work of the IRP. (h) *Actively contribute to strategic partnership building and resource mobilization efforts.*

Table 7. Examples of the functions of the Secretariat and Technical Support Units of existing science-policy panels. Text in italic indicates functions typically associated with the other subsidiary bodies providing administrative and scientific oversight or undertaking the panel's work, i.e., those more closely related to Table 5 or Table 6 above.

IPCC[73]	IPBES[74]	IRP[75]
Related to the programme of work (a) Supports the Panel, the IPCC Chair and other Members of the Executive Committee and the IPCC Bureaux both individually and corporately in the delivery of their mandate; including by ensuring that the IPCC work programme is implemented consistently with the Principles Governing IPCC Work and its Appendices, Decisions of the Panel and relevant UN and WMO regulations and rules. (b) Participates, through the Secretary of the IPCC, in the IPCC Executive Committee as an Advisory Member.	(a) Assisting the members of the Plenary, the Bureau and the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel to undertake their respective functions as decided by the Plenary, including facilitating communication between the various stakeholders of the Platform. (b) Facilitating communication among any working groups that might be established by the Plenary. (c) Assisting in the facilitation of monitoring and evaluation of the Platform's work.	(a) Provide technical and administrative support as needed to Panel and Steering Committee Co-Chairs for the effective fulfillment of their roles. (b) Support the development and implementation of the Work Programme in accordance with IRP Policies and Procedures. *(c) Draft the Work Programme with the inputs of Panel and Steering Committee, and support Panel members in the preparation of terms of reference and scoping studies.* *(d) Provide recommendations to the Steering Committee on any requests for IRP scientific studies and assessments received from other science-policy platforms or intergovernmental bodies, based on the IRP strategic direction and its financial and human capacities.* *(e) Interpret IRP Policies and Procedures and ensure observance of these rules by IRP members.* *(f) Prepare, in close cooperation with Lead Authors, the summary for policymakers of the Global Assessment on Natural Resources Use and Management, Thematic Studies and Assessments, and Rapid Studies and Assessments in consultation with Panel and Steering Committee Co-Chairs.* *(g) Recommend potential Working Group members, Panel members, Panel Co-Chairs, Review Editors and Expert Reviewers (as defined in paragraph 73(d) of these procedures), Steering Committee members and Steering Committee Co-Chairs.* *(h) Review the recommendations from the Group of Scientific Reviewers and appoint new and renewed Panel members after consultation with the Steering Committee.* (i) Monitor and report progress to the IRP on implementation of the approved Work Programme and budget.

[73] https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/09/IAC_Secretariat_TSU.pdf: Please note that the functions here have been re-ordered and grouped to provide a clear overview.

[74] https://www.ipbes.net/resource-file/2675: please note that the sequences here are re-ordered to align with similar functions under the IPCC.

[75] https://www.resourcepanel.org/sites/default/files/documents/document/media/policies_and_procedures_of_the_irp.pdf: please note that the sequences here are re-ordered to align with similar functions under the IPCC.

Related to budget and contract (c) Manages the IPCC Trust Fund and any other Funds agreed by the Panel, including budgeting, contributions to the IPCC Trust Fund, management of expenditure, auditing and reporting, consistent with WMO regulations and rules, and manages contractual and legal matters related to the IPCC.	(d) Preparing the Platform's draft budget for submission to the Plenary, managing the trust fund and preparing any necessary financial reports. (e) Assisting in the mobilization of financial resources.	(j) Manage annual cash and in-kind contributions received for the IRP, including the preparation of budget proposals, management of expenditure, monitoring, auditing and reporting, as per UN rules and regulations. (k) Manage contractual and legal matters related to the IRP as per UN rules and regulations.
Related to the meeting organizations (d) Organises and prepares documentation for Sessions of the IPCC and the IPCC Bureau; meetings of the Executive Committee; Sessions of IPCC Working Groups in cooperation with the IPCC Chair, relevant Co-chairs; and other meetings and task groups as decided by the Panel, the Bureau or the Executive Committee. (e) Supports, as required, the Working Groups, the Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories, any other Task Force constituted by the Panel and any other task group or committee established by the IPCC in the organisation of their meetings. (f) Manages the support for and assists with travel of delegates and experts eligible for support from the IPCC Trust Fund.	(f) Organizing meetings and providing administrative support for meetings, including the preparation of documents and reports to the Plenary and its subsidiary bodies as needed.	(l) Organize and facilitate IRP meetings, including the preparation of background documents, identification and invitation of participants, coordination of meeting logistics, and the organization of travel arrangements for Panel members, Panel Co-Chairs, external experts contributing to the IRP's work, and Steering Committee members in accordance with paragraph 50 of these procedures and with UN rules and regulations.
Related to specific functions/activities (h) Contributes to the implementation of the IPCC Protocol for addressing possible errors, the IPCC Communication Strategy and the Conflict of Interest Policy; in accordance with its responsibilities contained in these documents.	-	(n) Prepare, implement, monitor and report progress to IRP on the communications strategy, outreach and capacity development activities.
Related to information-sharing (g) Provides information management for the IPCC, including the archiving of IPCC reports and material used for their preparation, in accordance with the Principles and Procedures of the IPCC and in co-operation with the Technical Support Units.	(g) Disseminating public information and assisting in outreach activities and in the production of relevant communication materials.	(m) Coordinate the publication process of IRP scientific studies and assessments and ensure wide access to these publications by target audiences.

Related to being contact points (i) Provides the principal point of contact for members of the IPCC and observer organizations. (j) Promotes and maintains cooperation, as principal IPCC contact point, with the UN system, in particular with UNFCCC and other relevant UN bodies; and liaises with the two parent organizations, WMO and UNEP.	-	(o) As principal point of contact of the IRP, promote and maintain cooperation with the UN system.
Miscellaneous (k) Undertakes any other tasks as required to support the IPCC in fulfilling its mandate as assigned by the Panel, the IPCC Bureau or the Executive Committee.	-	(p) Monitor the uptake of IRP scientific studies and assessments by media, policy-makers and other target audiences, and report to the Steering Committee on their impact.
Technical Support Units (TSUs) (a) Support the Co-chairs and Bureaux of their respective WG or TF, or the IPCC Chair in the case of the Synthesis Report, in the preparation and production of all relevant IPCC products defined in Appendix A to the Principles Governing IPCC Work and in accordance with these Principles. (b) Contribute to the implementation of the IPCC Protocol for addressing errors, the IPCC Communication Strategy and the Conflict of Interest Policy, in accordance with their responsibilities contained in these documents. (c) Participate, through their TSU heads, in the IPCC Executive Committee as Advisory Members. (d) Undertake any other task as required by the Co-Chairs or WG/TF Bureaux, or the IPCC Chair in the case of the Synthesis Report, to assist them in fulfilling their IPCC roles.	**Technical Support Units (TSUs)** Furthermore, the secretariat may be tasked by the Plenary with undertaking technical support functions, such as providing relevant assistance to ensure that the Platform implements its work programme. Such potential functions need to be developed following discussion of the work programme and would be implemented under the direction of the Plenary.	-

2.4 Relationships with Stakeholders

69. Effective engagement and relationships with a broad range of stakeholders can enhance a science-policy panel's credibility, relevance, legitimacy, transparency, iterativity, and inclusiveness in various ways.[76]

70. For example, stakeholder engagement can expand the pool of potential experts involved in the panel's work, increasing interest in nominations and preventing a shortage of experts. Stakeholders may provide valuable knowledge and perspectives, boosting a panel's credibility. They also enhance the legitimacy and relevance of a panel's outputs, avoid duplication, and creating synergies through their inputs, oversight, and transparency. For instance, the 2019 IPBES effectiveness review emphasized the importance of involving regional and national policymakers, policy practitioners, experts, and decision-makers from civil society and business in developing the programme of work to ensure policy relevance and foster uptake and impact.[77] Further experiences from IPBES and IPCC highlight the importance of engaging Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

71. Stakeholders also play a crucial role in disseminating and promoting the panel's outputs. Existing science-policy panels show that involving various stakeholders in follow-up activities (e.g., translating into local languages, dissemination, creating policy briefs, raising awareness) can enhance the uptake of the panel's outputs by policymakers and decision-makers.

72. Stakeholders can be further tasked with delivering some of the panel's functions. The 2019 IPBES effectiveness review identified stakeholders as having significant potential to conduct capacity-building activities on behalf of IPBES.[78] Similarly, stakeholders can contribute to functions related to knowledge management and information-sharing.

73. Existing science-policy panels show that stakeholders contribute in various ways and point towards a combination of approaches towards establishing relationships with key stakeholders.

    a. Inclusion in institutional arrangements, rules, and procedures. For example, existing panels often have provisions for stakeholders' participation in meetings of the governing body, and its subsidiary bodies in some cases (see Table 3). Additionally, work-related processes and procedures may enable stakeholders to contribute to work programme development, nominate experts, provide feedback during the scoping of assessments and other deliverables, and review drafts (see Table 10).

    b. Establishment of formal strategic partnerships. For example, IPBES and IRP have formed partnerships with various stakeholders to support the development and dissemination of the panel's work, enhance impact, and create synergies with other relevant stakeholders (see Table 3). These strategic partners may include UN bodies, multilateral environmental agreements, other intergovernmental bodies, international and regional NGOs, private and public institutions, business and industry associations, research centers, universities, foundations, and other science-policy panels.

[76] https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/33808/OSSP.pdf

[77] Finding 6 and recommendations 4 and 33 of the 2019 IPBES effectiveness review (IPBES/7/INF/18).

[78] Finding 27 of the 2019 IPBES effectiveness review.

c. Promotion of stakeholder involvement through informal arrangements, including in delivery of the work programme. IPBES has many examples, including guidance to stakeholders on their engagement as collaborative supporters for successful implementation of the work programme, self-organized stakeholder networks, open-to-all stakeholder days in advance of a plenary session, stakeholder registry.[79]

74. Formalizing partnerships can clarify the roles and responsibilities of partners in an open and transparent manner. This was highlighted by the IPCC's Working Group Co-Chairs of the sixth assessment cycle. They recommended that the IPCC consider how to best coordinate and liaise with external organizations from the outset in the preparation of products and outreach.[80] The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), through its strong partnership and cooperation with IPBES at the secretariat level (see Table 3), stands out among multilateral environmental agreements for its effective uptake of IPBES work.[81] Sustained interaction through formal partnerships can also lead to a synergistic co-production of science and policy, enhancing the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of the panel. However, relationships with stakeholders should not compromise the panel's independence, and conflict-of-interest policies need to be in place to protect the panel from vested interests (see Section 2.7.4).

75. In-kind contributions in informal arrangements should be recognized and incentivized. Both the IPCC Working Group Co-Chairs of the sixth assessment cycle and the 2019 IPBES effectiveness review highlighted that science-policy panels rely heavily on in-kind contributions from the scientific community, partners, and other stakeholders. Over time, this reliance can lead to fatigue and demotivation among experts. The IPBES review recommended establishing an incentive system for in-kind contributions, such as visibility and recognition.

76. **Elements for further consideration and discussion:** To establish effective relationships with stakeholders, IPEA may use both formal and informal approaches that complement each other. These may include:

    a. Inclusion in institutional arrangements, rules, and procedures to allow stakeholders to participate as observers in meetings and provide inputs,

    b. Inclusion of provisions in institutional arrangements for forming partnerships with certain stakeholders, and/or

    c. Promotion of stakeholder involvement through a wide range of informal arrangements.

    Regardless of the chosen approach or combination of approaches, it is essential to ensure that any conflicts of interest are effectively avoided (see Section 2.7.4) and that all relevant relationships are communicated transparently, especially regarding the relevance and role of different stakeholders in the panel's work. It is also important to engage a broad range of stakeholders, including other existing science-policy bodies at various levels, such as through the AMR Multistakeholder Partnership Platform. A stakeholder mapping and stakeholder engagement strategy are being developed as a separate document in parallel. Furthermore,

[79] https://www.ipbes.net/stakeholders

[80] IPCC-LVII/INF.12, Lesson 4

[81] Finding 9 of the 2019 IPBES effectiveness review (IPBES/7/INF/18).

details of the selected approaches to engaging with relevant stakeholders may be further elaborated through the development of general or specific procedures, policies, and/or guidance (see Section 2.7)—including criteria for selecting relevant stakeholders based on their expertise—either prior to or following the formal establishment of IPEA.

2.5 Effectiveness evaluation mechanisms

77. Effectiveness evaluation is essential for a science-policy panel to achieve its goals and deliver impactful results. It identifies strengths and areas for improvement, allowing for continuous enhancement of processes and outcomes. This process also builds trust and credibility among stakeholders by demonstrating a commitment to quality and responsiveness to feedback.

78. Existing science-policy panels have adopted various approaches (see Table 8). For instance, IPBES includes a straightforward provision in its founding document. IRP does not have such a provision, and neither does IPCC officially. However, the IPCC Working Group Co-Chairs of the sixth assessment cycle created an informal lessons-learned document to guide the panel's continuous development.

Table 8. Examples of the effectiveness evaluation mechanisms of existing science-policy panels

	Effectiveness evaluation
IPCC	No official evaluation mechanism, but the Working Groups Co-Chairs developed "Working Group Co-Chair's Perspective on Lessons Learned from AR6" (IPCC-LVII/INF.12).
IPBES[82]	The Platform's efficiency and effectiveness is independently and externally reviewed and evaluated on a periodic basis as decided by the Plenary, with adjustments to be made as necessary.
IRP	No official evaluation mechanism

79. **Elements for further consideration and discussion:** Moving forward, IPEA may include a provision on effectiveness evaluation in its founding document, similar to the approach taken by IPBES. This would help ensure continuous improvement and accountability in its processes and outcomes.

2.6 Financial arrangements

80. The financial arrangements of a science-policy panel are crucial for ensuring the panel's operations and flexibility to respond to the needs of member governments and stakeholders and fulfill its functions, as agreed by the governing body. Establishing sustainable and predictable funding is key to maintaining the Panel's long-term viability. This analysis focuses on the operational mechanisms of financial arrangements rather than the specific costs of a panel, which largely depend on its design (though some information on indicative annual costs of existing panels can be found in Section 3). It is also noteworthy that the IPCC has established an Ad-Hoc Task Group on Financial Stability (Table 9), with the purpose to propose funding options and their implications to the Panel, ensuring predictable, sustainable, and adequate means for the smooth implementation of IPCC's programme of work.

[82] https://www.ipbes.net/resource-file/2675

81. As shown in Table 9, financial arrangements typically include an independent trust fund for collecting resources and a budget process, often tied to the programme of work, for allocating and disbursing funds. The budget is usually adopted at set intervals by the panel's governing body. Oversight of the financial arrangements of a science-policy panel is typically managed by the governing body and the administrative oversight body, while administration of these arrangements commonly falls under the secretariat functions.

82. Contributions to a science-policy panel are generally welcomed from various sources (Table 9), while most resources typically come from member governments on a voluntary basis (with the exception of IRP, mandating its Steering Committee members from OECD countries to provide annual financial contributions). Voluntary contributions are usually expected to come without conditionalities, will not influence the panel's work, and cannot be earmarked for specific activities except with Plenary approval. Existing science-policy panels also rely on various in-kind contributions, such as *pro bono* expert participation, secretariat staffing, technical support unit services, conference services, and communication services. Transparency regarding the origin of in-kind and monetary contributions helps guard against potential conflicts of interest.

Table 9. Examples of the financial arrangements of existing science-policy panels

	Financial Arrangements
IPCC[83]	Funded by regular contributions from its parent organizations WMO and UNEP, and voluntary contributions from its member governments and the UNFCCC. The IPCC Trust Fund is administered under the Financial Regulations of the WMO. It supports IPCC activities, in particular the participation of developing country experts in the IPCC, the organization of meetings as well as publication and translation of IPCC reports. Information about contributions received and expenditures incurred is provided by the Secretariat to the Panel, and the annual budget is decided by the Panel at its Plenary Sessions. Governments provide further substantial in-kind support for activities of the IPCC, in particular by hosting Technical Support Units, supporting the participation of experts from their respective countries in IPCC activities, and by hosting meetings. The Panel established the Ad-Hoc Task Group on Financial Stability, whose purpose is to propose to the Panel funding options and their implications in order to provide predictable, sustainable and adequate means for a smooth implementation of the IPCC's work programme.
IPBES[84]	A core trust fund is established to receive voluntary contributions from Governments, as well as from United Nations bodies, the Global Environment Facility, other intergovernmental organizations and other stakeholders such as the private sector and foundations, on the understanding that such funding will come without conditionalities, will not orient the work of the Platform and cannot be earmarked for specific activities. Its use will be determined by the Plenary in an open and transparent manner. Exceptionally, subject to approval by the Plenary, additional voluntary contributions may be accepted outside the trust fund, such as direct support for specific activities of the Platform's work programme. In-kind contributions come without conditionalities from Governments, the scientific community, other knowledge holders and stakeholders.
IRP[85]	Steering Committee members from the countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (hereinafter referred to as "OECD") shall provide annual financial

[83] https://www.ipcc.ch/documentation/procedures/

[84] https://www.ipbes.net/resource-file/2675

[85] https://www.resourcepanel.org/sites/default/files/documents/document/media/policies_and_procedures_of_the_irp.pdf; https://www.resourcepanel.org/donors

	contributions to the IRP. In addition to an annual cash contribution, OECD members may provide in-kind contributions to the IRP. Steering Committee members from non-OECD countries shall strive to provide annual financial or in-kind contributions to the IRP in accordance with their capacities. In-kind contributions comprise support to the development of scientific studies and assessments (expertise, data and case studies); hosting IRP biannual meetings and expert workshops, Working Group meetings, outreach and capacity development events; translating scientific studies and assessments; among others. The Secretariat shall report on budget implementation and prepare an annual financial report to be submitted to the Steering Committee for information at first annual meetings of the IRP. In addition to the European Commission, 13 national governments, and UNEP, SUN Institute Environment & Sustainability—initiated by Deutsche Post Foundation—is a donor.

83. **Elements for further consideration and discussion:** Considering the information provided, the following key elements may be considered for the financial arrangements of IPEA:

    a. A trust fund may be established or engaged, and may be allocated by the governing body in an open and transparent manner to collect voluntary financing to support the panel's work, governed by financial rules and procedures adopted by the governing body.

    b. Diverse contributions may be welcomed from governments, UN bodies, other intergovernmental organizations, and stakeholders such as the private sector and foundations. These contributions should come without conditionalities, should not influence the panel's work, and cannot be earmarked for specific activities except with the governing body's approval .

    c. The governing body may regularly review the expenditures and budget proposals and adopt the budget for the Panel. The administrative oversight body may regularly review budget information prepared by the secretariat in between the sessions of the governing body. The secretariat may prepare the panel's draft budget for submission to the governing body, manage the financial arrangements, and prepare any necessary financial reports.

    d. A task group on financial stability may be established to propose funding options and their implications to the Panel, ensuring predictable, sustainable, and adequate means for the smooth implementation of IPCC's programme of work.

2.7 Rules, policies and procedures

2.7.1 Overview of the rules, policies and procedures by existing science-policy panels

84. In addition to the key elements mentioned above, existing science-policy panels have developed extensive rules, policies, and procedures to support their effective operations. These cover the operational rules for decision-making bodies, procedures for completing their functions (including the development of the programme of work), financial rules, and more. An overview of the rules, policies and procedures by existing science-policy panels is outlined in Table 10.

85. It should be noted that not all rules, policies, and procedures need to be established simultaneously prior to the establishment of IPEA. Some are more critical for IPEA to begin its work promptly after its establishment, such as the rules of procedure, financial procedures, conflict-of-interest policy, and procedure for determining its programme of work. Other rules and procedures can be developed later on. The following sub-sections will elaborate further on those more critical rules, policies and procedures.

86. **Elements for further consideration and discussion:** Given the tight timeline, it may be prudent to initially focus on developing the rules, policies, and procedures that will enable IPEA to begin its work promptly after its establishment. This approach ensures that the Panel can start functioning effectively while other rules and procedures can be developed later.

Table 10. Mapping the rules, policies and procedures by the analysed existing science-policy panels

IPCC[86]	IPBES[87]	IRP[88]
Principles governing IPCC Work	Rules of procedure for sessions of the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services	Policies and procedures of the International Resource Panel, Section II
Procedures for the election of IPCC Bureau and any Task Force Bureau		Policies and procedures of the International Resource Panel, Section III
Policy and process for admitting Observer Organization		
Guidelines for partiation of admitted Observer Organization	-	-
Financial procedures	Financial procedures	-
Conflict of interest policy	Conflict of interest policy and implementation procedures	Policies and procedures of the International Resource Panel, Annex 1. Conflict of interest policy
Framework and set of criteria for establishing priorities for Special Reports, Methodology Reports and Technical Papers	Procedure for receiving and prioritizing requests put to the Platform	Policies and procedures of the International Resource Panel, Section IV
Procedures for the preparation, review, acceptance, adoption, approval and publication of IPCC reports	Procedures for the preparation of Platform deliverables	Policies and procedures of the International Resource Panel, Section IV and Annex 3. Guidelines on external expert review process
Procedure on the use of literature in IPCC reports		Policies and procedures of the International Resource Panel, Annex 4. Guidelines on the use of literature in IRP publications
Protocol for addressing possible errors		Policies and procedures of the International Resource Panel, Annex 5. Protocol for addressing possible errors in IRP publications

[86] https://www.ipcc.ch/documentation/procedures/; https://www.ipcc.ch/data/

[87] https://www.ipbes.net/documents/policies-procedures; https://files.ipbes.net/ipbes-web-prod-public-files/downloads/Decision_IPBES_3_4_EN_0.pdf; https://www.ipbes.net/modules-assessment-guide

[88] https://www.resourcepanel.org/about-us; https://www.resourcepanel.org/sites/default/files/documents/document/media/policies_and_procedures_of_the_irp.pdf

Guidance note for Lead Authors on consistent treatment of uncertainties	-	-
Guidance for the core functions of the IPCC Data Distribution Centre (DDC)	-	-
-	Guidance documents to assessment teams, including on data and knowledge management policy, on the knowledge gaps' identification process, for recognizing and working with Indigenous and local knowledge, on how to assess policy instruments and facilitate the use of policy support tools and methodologies, and on using the Nature Futures Framework	-
IPCC Communications Strategy	Communications and outreach strategy	-
-	Stakeholder engagement strategy	-
-	Guidance on the development of strategic partnerships and other collaborative arrangements	-
Gender Policy and Implementation Plan	-	-
-	IPBES manual for national focal points	-

2.7.2 Rules of procedure

87. Rules of procedure sets out the formal guidelines and processes that govern how the Panel's governing bodies operate. They ensure that meetings are conducted in an orderly and transparent manner, decisions are made fairly, and all members and stakeholders/observers have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They cover aspects such as the voting procedures, the establishment of subsidiary bodies, and the conduct of meetings. By providing a structured framework, the rules of procedure help maintain consistency, accountability, and legitimacy in the functioning of a science-policy panel.

88. It typically covers the following sections: (1) the scope/purpose of rules of procedure; (2) definitions; (3) venue, dates and notification of sessions; (4) members and observers; (5) admission and participation of observers; (6) agenda; (7) representation, credentials and accreditation; (8) membership and operation of the oversight body or bodies; (9) membership, operation and election of members of any subsidiary bodies; (10) conduct of business; (11) decision-making; (12) languages; and (13) modifications to the rules of procedure.

89. Certain elements of the rules of procedure depend on the institutional arrangements of the panel, e.g., members and observers, as well as how the oversight body or bodies are set up and what kind of work bodies may be opted for. Typically, such elements can only be drafted after the institutional arrangements are finalized. In contrast, other elements such as venue/modality,

dates and notification of sessions, as well as representation, credentials and accreditation, may build on commonly agreed language by existing science-policy panels.

90. Today, the decision-making process is often a controversial aspect of the rules of procedure. Existing science-policy panels typically handle this by reaching consensus on substantive issues and allowing voting for procedural matters. Such a practice may also be considered by IPEA.

    a. IPCC[89]: "In taking decisions, and approving, adopting and accepting reports, the Panel, its Working Groups and any Task Forces shall use all best endeavours to reach consensus. If consensus is judged by the relevant body not possible: (a) for decisions on procedural issues, these shall be decided according to the General Regulations of the WMO; (b) for approval, adoption and acceptance of reports, differing views shall be explained and, upon request, recorded. Differing views on matters of a scientific, technical or socio-economic nature shall, as appropriate in the context, be represented in the scientific, technical or socio-economic document concerned. Differences of views on matters of policy or procedure shall, as appropriate in the context, be recorded in the Report of the Session."

    b. IPBES[90]:
        i. "The members of the Platform take decisions on matters of substance by consensus, unless otherwise provided in its rules."
        ii. "On matters of procedure, the members of the Platform are to make every effort to achieve consensus. If all efforts by the members of the Platform to achieve consensus on a matter of procedure have been exhausted, and no consensus has been reached, the decision will, as a last resort, unless otherwise provided by these rules of procedure, be taken by a two-thirds vote of the members of the Platform present and voting."
        iii. "If the question arises whether a matter is one of procedural or substantive nature, the Chair shall rule on the question. An appeal against this ruling shall be put to the vote immediately and the Chair's ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the members present and voting."
        iv. "When considering reports, differing views are to be explained and, upon request, recorded. Differing views on matters of a scientific, technical, or socioeconomic nature are, as appropriate in the context, to be represented in the scientific, technical, or socioeconomic document concerned. Differences of views on matters of policy or procedure are, as appropriate in the context, to be recorded in the Report of the Session."

2.7.3 Financial procedures

91. Financial procedures typically set out the operation and funding of a Trust Fund, as well as what constitutes the institution's resources. These procedures are generally developed based on the financial procedures of the host institution.

92. **Elements for further consideration and discussion:** No action is needed until the host institution is determined.

[89] https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/09/ipcc-principles.pdf
[90] https://www.ipbes.net/resource-file/5374

2.7.4 Conflict-of-interest policies

93. Addressing (potential) conflicts of interest is crucial to safeguarding the objectivity and transparency of work, ensuring the panel's legitimacy, independence, and credibility. Existing science-policy panels have established conflict-of-interest policies, with several commonalities, including purpose, definition, and scope (see Table 11).

94. According to the policies of IPCC and IPBES, a "conflict of interest" refers to any current professional, financial, or other interest that could: (i) significantly impair the individual's objectivity in carrying out their duties and responsibilities for the interface, or (ii) create an unfair advantage for any person or organization.

Table 11. Examples of key elements in the conflict-of-interest policies of existing science-policy panels[91]

IPCC[92]	IPBES[93]
Scope	
Senior IPCC leadership, other members of the IPCC Bureau and members of the Task Force Bureau, authors with responsibilities for report content, Review Editors and the professional staff of the Technical Support Units (TSUs)	senior leadership including members of the Bureau, the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and any other work bodies, authors with responsibility for report content, review editors and the professional staff of a technical support unit
Applies to all IPCC products	applies to any and all deliverables
Applies only to current conflicts of interest, but past interests that have expired, no longer exist, and cannot reasonably affect current behavior. Nor does it apply to possible interests that may arise in the future but that do not currently exist, as such interests are inherently speculative and uncertain.	Applies only to current conflicts of interest and does not apply to past interests that have expired
Professional and other non-financial interests need to be disclosed only if they are significant and relevant (e.g., senior editorial roles, advisory committees associated with private sector organizations, and memberships on boards of non-profit or advocacy groups).	Professional and other non-financial interests need to be disclosed only if they are significant and relevant (e.g., advisory committees associated with private sector organizations, and memberships on boards of non-profit or advocacy groups).
Financial interests need to be disclosed only if they are significant and relevant (e.g., employment relationships; consulting relationships; financial investments; intellectual property interests; and commercial interests and sources of private-sector research support).	Financial interests need to be disclosed only if they are significant and relevant (e.g., employment relationships; consulting relationships; financial investments; intellectual property interests; and commercial interests and sources of private-sector research support).
Individuals should also disclose significant and relevant financial interests of any person with whom the individual has a substantial business or relevant shared interest.	Individuals should also disclose the significant and relevant financial interests of any person with whom the individual has a substantial business or relevant shared interest, such as a close family member.

[91] The IRP has created its own conflict-of-interest policies, but they have not been made publicly available. As a result, they are not included here.

[92] https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2024/09/IPCC_Conflict_of_Interest_Policy_AUG_2024.pdf; https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2019/01/coi_method_of_working.pdf

[93] https://www.ipbes.net/resource-file/5375

Implementation arrangements	
Overseen by a COI Committee that comprises all elected members of the Executive Committee and two additional members with appropriate legal expertise appointed by the WMO and UNEP	Overseen by a COI Committee that comprises three elected members from the Bureau, including one of the Bureau vice-chairs as chair, and five members, one per United Nations region, selected by the Bureau following a call for nominees from member countries of the Platform, together with one additional member with appropriate legal expertise from, and appointed by, the organization hosting the secretariat.

95. Conflict-of-interest policies generally apply to all relevant individuals on the panel, including leaderships, those responsible for report content, and TSU staff. These policies cover any significant and relevant professional, non-financial, and financial interests of the individuals, as well as those of any person with whom they have a substantial business or shared interest (such as a close family member). Addressing potential institutional conflicts of interest may be additionally considered as part of how the panel establishes relationships with key stakeholders.

96. Identifying a potential conflict of interest does not automatically mean that a conflict of interest exists. The policies aim to enable individuals to provide relevant information necessary for each situation to be evaluated by an oversight body (e.g., a standing conflict-of-interest committee) that reports to the governing body. Additionally, disclosure of a potential conflict of interest on an issue does not necessarily mean fully excluding individuals from the process. While these individuals may not be allowed to draft text on the issue, they can still provide inputs as stakeholders. Thus, robust conflict-of-interest policies can help in understanding diverse perspectives and bringing knowledge together transparently, while preventing undue influence from conflicts of interest that could negatively affect the panel's work.

97. Additionally, the conflict-of-interest policies of IPCC and IPBES include two annexes for implementation: one outlining the procedures and another containing the conflict-of-interest declaration form. Both organizations have established dedicated committees to handle declarations, although the committee memberships differ.

98. **Elements for further consideration and discussion:** The following questions may be considered prior to developing the details of conflict-of-interest policies—which may build upon existing frameworks, best practices and answers to these questions:

    a. To whom will the policies apply, and what information will need to be disclosed?
    b. How will disclosures be reviewed, by whom, and with what consequences?

2.7.5 Procedures for developing the work programme, including prioritization

99. A work programme sets out a panel's priorities and expected outputs within a defined timeframe and relevant scale. As noted above, developing work programmes through an open, transparent, and inclusive process can help define the panel's specific work and activities, aligning with identified needs, priorities, and existing initiatives while avoiding unnecessary duplication. While existing science-policy panels follow similar approaches, they differ in specific details (e.g., the time frame) due to their unique institutional settings (see Table 12).

Table 12. Examples of work programme development of existing science-policy panels.

IPCC[94]	IPCC organizes its work into assessment cycles. Early in each assessment cycle, the panel decides on topics for special reports to be prepared in addition to the comprehensive global assessment output of each assessment cycle. Additionally, framework and set of criteria for establishing priorities for Special Reports, Methodology Reports and Technical Papers has been established.
IPBES[95]	The first IPBES work programme was time limited (from 2014 to 2018) but in 2019 IPBES adopted a rolling work programme up to 2030 that initially focused on three topics and included six objectives, thus providing a specific framework to guide the platform's ongoing work. The rolling work programme is supplemented by a procedure for receiving and prioritizing requests put to the platform, which sets out a process for Governments and governing bodies of multilateral environmental agreements to submit requests "on scientific and technical matters that require the platform's attention and action" at least six months prior to each session of the Plenary of IPBES.
IRP[96]	A strategic planning exercise is conducted by the IRP every 4 years to define the strategy and priority areas of the IRP. As part of this exercise, public consultations may be organized to capture views from external public or private stakeholders. As a result of this exercise, the Secretariat, based on inputs from the Panel and Steering Committee and public consultations will develop a Work Programme with the strategic direction, priority areas and description of potential scientific studies and assessments of the IRP in the corresponding cycle. The Work Programme is submitted to the Panel for input and recommendations and to the Steering Committee for approval.

100. The procedures for determining a work programme generally involve receiving input on potential matters, prioritizing these inputs, allocating them to individual functions, and adopting or approving the work programme by the governing body. This process requires balancing needs and priorities against available time, budgetary resources, and other considerations.

101. The approaches to receiving input submissions for potential inclusion in the work programme differ among existing science-policy panels. Identifying who can suggest input is crucial for enhancing policy relevance and legitimacy. This is particularly important when those whom the panel aims to inform and impact can effectively communicate their needs.

a. The IPCC focuses on tasks mandated by resolutions and decisions from WMO's Executive Council and the Environment Assembly of UNEP, as well as actions supporting the UNFCCC process.

b. IPBES receives requests from Governments and the multilateral environmental agreements, while United Nations bodies can provide inputs and suggestions as determined by their respective governing bodies. Relevant stakeholders, such as other intergovernmental organizations, international and regional scientific organizations,

[94] https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/09/revd-decision-framework-for-special-reports.pdf

[95] https://www.ipbes.net/work-programme

[96] https://www.resourcepanel.org/sites/default/files/documents/document/media/policies_and_procedures_of_the_irp.pdf

environment trust funds, non-governmental organizations, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and the private sector, are also encouraged to submit inputs so that their perspectives can be taken into account, as appropriate.

c. IRP conducts a strategic planning exercise every four years to define its strategy and priority areas. Based on inputs from the Panel itself and from the Steering Committee as well as public consultations, the secretariat develops the work programme with strategic direction, priority areas and a description of potential scientific studies and assessments for the corresponding cycle; the programme is submitted to the Panel for input and recommendations prior to approval by the Steering Committee.

102. The panel may require that requests, inputs, and needs be accompanied by additional information to support their consideration. For example, IPBES requires that requests include details on their relevance to the objective, functions, and work programme; urgency of action and imminence of risk; relevance for specific policies and processes; geographic scope; anticipated level of complexity; reasons why the Platform is best suited to take action; availability of scientific literature and expertise; scope of potential impacts and beneficiaries; resource requirements (both financial and human); and potential duration. However, it is important to ensure that the opportunity to provide supporting information does not create inequities or barriers for any specific constituency in bringing forward their issues of interest.

103. A wide range of input may necessitate a prioritization procedure to guide the development of the work programme. This process can be informed by the approaches used by existing science-policy panels, such as identifying which subsidiary bod(ies) are responsible for developing the draft work programme and how it is subsequently approved by the governing body. It may be interesting to note that in 2019, IPBES adopted a rolling work programme up to 2030 that initially focused on three topics and included six objectives, thus providing a specific framework to guide the platform's ongoing work.

104. **Elements for further consideration and discussion:** The following questions may be considered prior to developing the details of Procedures for developing the work programme, including prioritization:

a. Who can submit input for consideration in the work programme development?
b. What information will be required to support submissions?
c. Who will screen and review submissions and prioritize them, if needed, and according to what timeline?
d. Should a longer-term rolling programme be developed as a specific framework to guide IPEA's work?

3 Summary and ways forward

105. Building upon a review of existing science-policy panels, including IPCC, IPBES, and IRP, this thought starter outlines key elements for establishing a strong and effective science-policy panel to be considered for IPEA, including scope/objective of the panel (Section 2.1), functions and outputs (Section 2.2), institutional arrangements on the membership of the panel, governing body, subsidiary bodies providing administrative and scientific oversight, subsidiary bodies undertaking the panel's work, and secretariat (Section 2.3), relationships with

stakeholders (Section 2.4), effectiveness evaluation mechanisms (Section 2.5), financial arrangements (Section 2.6), and various rules, policies and procedures (Section 2.7). For each element, this thought starter provides an outlook with some lessons learned from the existing panels that may be taken into account while designing IPEA to maximize its core qualities, such as scientific credibility, policy relevance, and political legitimacy. These key considerations and questions aim to initiate a broader discussion to collect feedback and perspectives from Member States and stakeholders, enabling effective preparation of the key documents for establishing IPEA and its operations that address the needs comprehensively.

106. It is important to recognize that there is no one-size-fits-all model for science–policy panels. This thought starter, by no means, suggests that IPEA should simply replicate existing science-policy panels such as IPCC, IPBES and IRP. Rather, its design should be guided by the panel's specific objectives and intended functions, while drawing on relevant lessons and key elements from existing models, to ensure it is fit for purpose. Equally relevant is the consideration of pragmatic operational approaches, including cost-effectiveness, to support the panel's sustainability and impact.

107. That said, it is important to acknowledge that while existing science–policy panels may sometimes be perceived by some as costly, a major portion of their budgets is dedicated to the implementation of their work programme, including ensuring equitable participation by governments and scientists from the Global South in its work—an essential element in fostering inclusiveness, enhancing policy relevance, strengthening scientific robustness and credibility, and upholding the political legitimacy of these panels. It is also worth noting that even the most recently established panel, IPBES (founded in 2012) has now been operating for over a decade. Over time, its work programme has expanded significantly, which has naturally placed increasing demands on its Secretariat.

108. In 2024, IPCC allocated CHF bodies (including two plenary sessions and Bureau meetings), around 1 million CHF for scoping meetings, expert consultations, and workshops, and about 0.5 million CHF for additional activities such as translation, data support, and distribution. These expenditures formed part of the total budget of approximately 5.5 million CHF for the year, with the remaining funds primarily dedicated to supporting the Secretariat.[97]

109. In 2023, IPBES allocated approximately 1.4 million USD to support meetings of its bodies, and 3 million USD for implementation of the work programme including various activities on five strategic objectives. These expenditures formed part of the total budget of approximately 7.1 million USD for the year, with the remaining funds primarily dedicated to supporting the Secretariat.[98]

110. In 2025, IRP allocated approximately 0.3 million USD to support meetings of its bodies, and 1.9 million USD for implementation of the work programme for including over 10 deliverables. These expenditures formed part of the total budget of approximately 3.4 million USD for the year, with the remaining funds primarily dedicated to supporting the Secretariat and operational costs.

[97] https://apps.ipcc.ch/eventmanager/documents/88/180220250655-Doc.%202,%20Rev.1%20-%20IPCC%20Programme%20and%20Budget.pdf

[98] https://www.ipbes.net/resource-file/105557

111. This financial support is further complemented by substantial, though often invisible, in-kind contributions from the scientific community—ranging from publicly funded research that generates relevant data to the pro bono efforts of numerous experts engaged in the panel's work. In turn, such panels contribute meaningfully to the development of scientific disciplines, research and education worldwide, inspiring future generations of researchers to engage with critical global challenges such as climate change and biodiversity loss. This not only strengthens the long-term viability and relevance of the panel itself but also reinforces the scientific foundation needed to address complex issues—an outcome whose value should not be underestimated.

112. Lastly, not all key elements outlined in the present document need to be finalized to establish IPEA in accordance with the 2024 Political Declaration. Some elements pertain more to the later operations of the panel and can be established by the panel itself. Additionally, from a legal perspective, the panel will be voluntary and thus differ from legally binding multilateral agreements, offering more flexibility to modify its key elements over time to remain agile and up-to-date. Therefore, feedback from Member States and stakeholders may keep in mind which levels of detail need to be defined currently, particularly regarding rules, policies, and procedures, prior to the launch of IPEA.