



YOUNG ECOSYSTEM SERVICES SPECIALISTS AT IPBES6

OUR EXPERIENCE AT IPBES6 PLENARY

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April 2018

ABOUT YESS DELEGATION

WHAT IS YESS?

Young Ecosystem Services Specialists (YESS) is a network of over 200 early career researchers in the field of ecosystem services across the world. The group aims to stimulate the exchange of ideas, identify knowledge gaps and build capacity in ecosystem service science and practice. It facilitates cooperation for innovative research and provides training opportunities in critical thinking and science communication.

[More about YESS](#)

WHAT IS IPBES?

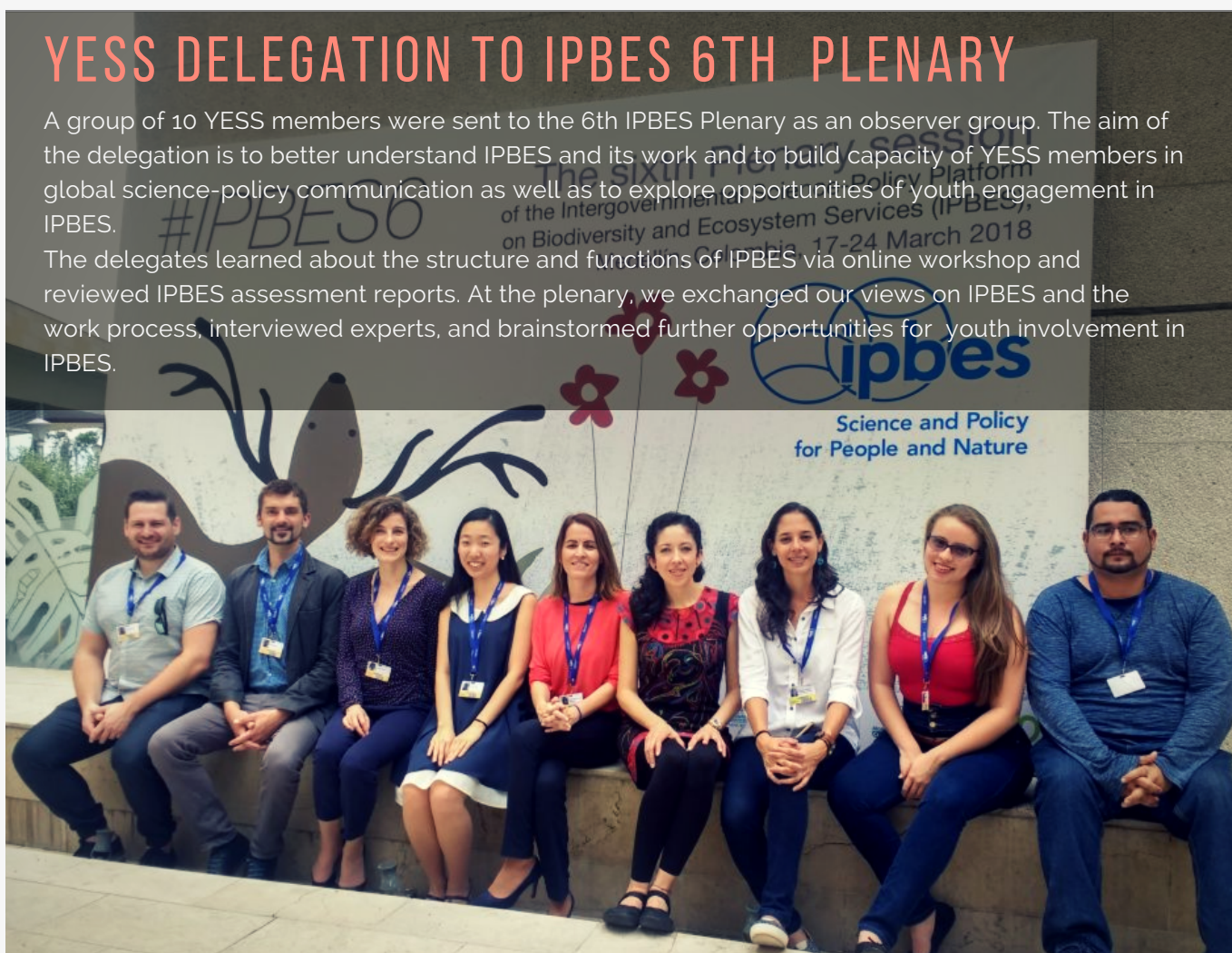
The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) is an intergovernmental body, established in 2012 to support the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). IPBES provides policy makers with scientific assessments about the state of biodiversity and the ecosystem services and with tools and methods for sustainable governance of natural assets.

[More about IPBES: NeFo \(2017\). A brief introduction for scientists, policy makers, and practitioners.](#)

YESS DELEGATION TO IPBES 6TH PLENARY

A group of 10 YESS members were sent to the 6th IPBES Plenary as an observer group. The aim of the delegation is to better understand IPBES and its work and to build capacity of YESS members in global science-policy communication as well as to explore opportunities of youth engagement in IPBES.

The delegates learned about the structure and functions of IPBES via online workshop and reviewed IPBES assessment reports. At the plenary, we exchanged our views on IPBES and the work process, interviewed experts, and brainstormed further opportunities for youth involvement in IPBES.



ABOUT IPBES6 PLENARY

OVERVIEW

The plenary was held from 17 to 24 March 2018 in Medellin, Colombia. Preceding the plenary, Stakeholder Day took place, where various organizations interested in IPBES discussed its work programmes, challenges and opportunities. The plenary discussed and approved five assessment reports and a framework for the second work programme along with financial and logistical arrangements. [Read highlights by IISD](#)



Photo by IISD/ENB | Diego Noguera

PROGRAMME

PROGRAMME													YESS ACTIVITY		IPBES PLENARY	
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
DAY1	STAKEHOLDER DAY										OPENING CEREMONEY					
DAY2	WRAP-UP #1	OPENING PLENARY		MEET-THE -EXPERT		PLENARY						REGIONAL ASSESSMENT CONTACT GROUP				
DAY3			REGIONAL ASSESSMENT CONTACT GROUP						REGIONAL ASSESSMENT CONTACT GROUP		WRAP-UP #2					
DAY4			PLE-NARY	STAKEHOLDER MEETING						REGIONAL ASSESSMENT CONTACT GROUP				REGIONAL ASSESSMENT CONTACT GROUP		
DAY5	WORKSHOP								THEMATIC ASSESSMENT CONTACT GROUP				THEMATIC ASSESSMENT CONTACT GROUP			
DAY6	MEET-THE -EXPERT	THEMATIC ASSESSMENT CONTACT GROUP						2ND WORK PROGRAMME CONTACT GROUP				PLENARY				
DAY7			PENDING ASSESSMENT CONTACT GROUP						MEET-THE -EXPERT	CONTACT GROUP	WRAP-UP #3					
DAY8	WRAP-UP #4	PLENARY		PLENARY												

*In the wrap-up sessions, the delegates shared their reflections on what they observed at the plenary. The following part of this report describes key results of the discussions.

BEFORE THE PLENARY

ONLINE WORKSHOP

The delegates gathered online early March and talked about the aims of the delegation. They also shared reflections on IPBES work including the conceptual framework and assessment reports.

[Watch the video record](#)
[Find the index of the video](#)

STAKEHOLDER DAY

Organizations interested in biodiversity and ecosystem services came together at the Stakeholder Day. The IPBES Secretariat explained the current work programme on communication, stakeholder engagement, regional and thematic assessments, and capacity building. Each topic was followed by a panel discussion.

Main issues include:

- How to enhance the impact of IPBES assessments
- How to identify and involve under-represented stakeholders
- How to incorporate Indigenous and Local Knowledge (ILK)
- How to ensure the policy relevance of the assessments
- How to prioritize capacity building requests

YESS OPINION ON STAKEHOLDER DAY

WHAT ARE TAKE-HOME MESSAGES FROM THE STAKEHOLDER DAY?

- Identifying and involving various ILK holders is on-going but challenging. Local and indigenous communities, especially the poor, are often under-represented.
- IPBES and the concept of ecosystem service are still barely known to the public.
- Effort on uptaking the assessments' results is essential.
- The private sector and the agriculture sector should be involved.

DID THE STAKEHOLDER DAY PROVIDE A GOOD PLATFORM FOR STAKEHOLDERS?

- It helped building a common understanding of IPBES.
- However the participants had little interaction with each other, and the dialogues were often one way and unproductive.
- There was also regional and sectoral imbalance among the participants (mainly conservation researchers from Europe).
- Engagement of a wider range of stakeholders is needed, potentially improving involvement via webcasts.

OUR EXPERIENCE 2_IPBES ASSESSMENTS

BEFORE THE PLENARY

REVIEW OF REPORTS

The delegates reviewed the summaries for policy makers of the regional and thematic assessment reports and discussed implication of the findings and improvement of the assessments.

[Read the review here](#)

SUMMARIES FOR POLICY MAKERS

The Plenary discussed the summaries for policy makers (SPMs) of the four regional assessments (the assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services in Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, and Europe and Central Asia) and one thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration.

Contact groups refined and concluded the SPMs, and the final SPMs and the chapters of the assessment reports were accepted by the plenary.

[Read the summaries for policy makers](#)

YESS OPINION ON ASSESSMENT REVIEW

	AFRICA	AMERICAS	ASIA-PACIFIC	ECA *
MAIN ISSUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drivers of biodiversity loss: over-exploitation vs. illegal exploitation Need for information on the value of biodiversity to the health sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Methodological consensus for footprints Under-representation of marine and arctic ecosystems Dispute over the unit of analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of the assessment Inclusion of marine and coastal ecosystems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistency and policy relevance of information Use of terminology 'Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLC)'
WORK PROCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficient mediation by the chair Few active countries in the discussion including Europe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active participation by most of American countries except for Caribbean countries South-north division 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few active countries in the discussions Insufficient time use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little dispute based on shared views No regional division Active explanation by authors
OUR SUGGESTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long and time-consuming process Few countries active in discussion 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get SPMs proofread by communication/policy experts before contact group discussion Involve social scientists as authors Make sure delegates well informed of decisions from previous plenaries 			

* ECA: Europe and Central Asia

OUR EXPERIENCE

3_MEET THE EXPERTS

YESS delegates talked to experts involved in IPBES in various ways. Each delegate also reached out to the delegation of his/her country for varied perspectives.

Dr. Katja Heubach, the Lead Author of the African regional assessment, shared her experience with the collaborative process of the assessment and inclusion of indigenous and local knowledge. ▼



With **Dr. Jennifer Hauck**, the Coordinating Lead Author of the regional assessment for Europe and Central Asia, we talked about the writing process and youth engagement. ▼



In the meeting with **Dr. Sandra Myrna Diaz**, ▲ the co-chair of the global assessment, we discussed the concept of Nature's Contribution to People (NCP), uptake of the regional assessments' findings in the global assessment, and transdisciplinary approaches.

Dr. Brenda McAfee of the Canadian delegation, who works for the Environment and Climate Change Canada, shared her experience with science-policy dialogues at IPBES.



At the **Stakeholders Meeting** event, we had ▲ an opportunity to talk to experts from other observer groups including International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), United Nations University (UNU), Asia Pacific Network (APN), Ecological Society (GfÖ), Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF), Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network (GEO BON), and the German Network-Forum for Biodiversity Research (NeFo).

HOW CAN YESS BE BETTER ENGAGED IN IPBES?

REVIEW PROCESS

IPBES invites stakeholders to the review process of its assessment reports, which still needs more attention and participation. YESS can encourage the members to participate in the review, e.g. by online workshops.

ASSESSMENT WRITING

The plenary agreed to initiate two pending assessments: i) the thematic assessment on the sustainable use of wild species and ii) the methodological assessment on diverse conceptualizations of multiple values of nature. You can apply for the Young Fellowship which offers training opportunities including writing a chapter mentored by lead authors. You can also contact lead authors to volunteer for the assessment writing. Stay tuned for the calls!

[More about Young Fellowship](#)

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER TO VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS

What's next after the assessment? Uptake the findings! It is important to make use of the knowledge and make the information accessible for various audiences - e.g. policy makers, businesses, local people, and children. Spread the knowledge using [media resources](#).



YESS
DELEGATES
DISCUSSING
POTENTIAL
COLLABORATION
PROJECTS
INSPIRED BY
IPBES6 PLENARY



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