WORKSHOP REPORT

FIRST CABES SUB-REGIONAL WORKSHOP EAST AFRICA

Theme:

Road to a Desired Future:
The IPBES Nature Futures' Framework and Science-Policy-Practice Interface for Vision *2050*

8 - 9 November, 2023

Jupiter International Hotel, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

ACRONYMS

AAU	Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia
HoAREC&N	Horn of Africa Regional Environment Center and Network
BMUV	German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety, and Consumer Protection
CEA-CCBAD	African Center of Excellence on Climate Change, Biodiversity, and Sustainable Agriculture
IKI	International Climate Initiative (of Germany)
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
KMGBF	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
NBSAPs	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
NFPs	National Focal Points
NFF	Nature Futures Framework (of IPBES)
UN SDGs	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
UFHB	Université Félix Houphouët Boigny, Côte d'Ivoire
UNEP-WCMC	United Nations Environment Program World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Cambridge, UK
UNILU	Université de Lubumbashi, Faculty of Agronomic Sciences, DRC
GEE	German Embassy, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
MAE	Ministry of Agriculture, Ethiopia
UP	University of Parakou, Benin

Table of Contents

Background to the CABES East-African sub-Regional Workshop

The *Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services* (IPBES, www.ipbes.net) is a coalition of governmental bodies from about 145 countries aimed at strengthening the interconnection between science and policy to augment the role of policies and ensure the applicability of scientific findings for the effective conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long term human well-being, and expediting the achievement of the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs). The platform was established after the 2010 resolution of the UN General Assembly and enacted at the plenary meeting organized by the *United Nations Environment Program* (UNEP) in 2012[1]. IPBES facilitates the engagement of decision-makers and relevant stakeholders in the practical application of knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem developed by science, to support policy at the global level, and its implementation at the national and regional levels. To this end, IPBES has already endorsed its engagement as packages of work programs with the main areas of focus being (1) assessing knowledge, (2) capacity building, (3) strengthening the knowledge foundations, (4) supporting policy at the global level, and its implementation at the national and regional levels.

With regards to its work area on assessing knowledge, IPBES conducts regular and timely assessments of knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services and their inter-linkages, which include comprehensive thematic, global, and regional assessments. To date, eight IPBES assessments have been completed. Currently, the *Nexus Assessment*: a thematic assessment of the inter-linkages among biodiversity, water, food, and health in the context of climate change, and the *Transformative Change Assessment*: A thematic assessment of the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and the determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity, are underway. In addition, the *business and biodiversity assessment*: A methodological assessment of the impact and dependence of business on biodiversity and nature's contributions to people will be conducted and completed until 2030[2].

Another key IPBES 2030 work program is supporting policy to enable stakeholders to identify and promote the development and use of policy instruments, policy support tools, and methodologies in the field of biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services. This can be achieved through the development of policy support tools, and methodologies, further work on scenarios and models of biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, and on multiple values. The IPBES work programs are implemented with the strong involvement of researchers and practitioners from the public and private sectors, as well as *non-governmental organizations* (NGOs), *Indigenous and local knowledge holders* (ILK), and IPBES *National Focal Points* NFPs)[3].

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[1] https://www.ipbes.net/history-establishment
[2] https://www.ipbes.net/assessing-knowledge
[3] https://www.ipbes.net/o4-supporting-policy

Most African countries are experiencing severe biodiversity erosion due a variety of natural and manmade factors, including climate change, agricultural expansions and uncontrolled extraction of natural resources. To halt and reverse biodiversity loss, IPBES range of products (e.g., assessments) with key policy recommendations that provide a framework to promote more sustainable biodiversity and ecosystem service-friendly policies can be leveraged on, adapted and implemented at national and subnational levels.

A brief overview of the CABES project:

In support of the IPBES programs, the *Capacity Development for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Experts in West, Central and East Africa* - CABES[4], has started to implement various capacity development activities in target African countries. The main goals of CABES are:

- To inform national decision-making processes and raise awareness on the works of IPBES and its multiple outputs.
- To increase participation of stakeholders in the IPBES rolling work programs at national, sub-regional, and regional levels through the establishment of 'network of platforms'
- To train scientists, researchers and facilitators to manage *Science-Policy-Practice Interfaces* (SPPIs) and to contribute to narrowing the knowledge gaps.
- To enhance the capacity of decision makers to support the implementation of biodiversity-related policies.

CABES engages relevant stakeholders through different capacity development initiatives. CABES has established Master program training on Science-Policy-Practice Interface in Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and Climate Change targeting youths across Africa at the *African Center of Excellence on Climate Change, Biodiversity, and Sustainable Agriculture* (CEA-CCBAD), *Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny* (UFHB), Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire (West Africa), and will open operations in 2024 at the Faculty of Agronomic Sciences of the *Université de Lubumbashi*, Democratic Republic of Congo (Central Africa) *and Addis Ababa University*-Horn of *Africa Regional Environment Center and Network* (AAU-HOAREC&N) in Ethiopia (East Africa). Furthermore, the project also supports the establishment of national biodiversity platforms in eight countries: Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, and Sierra Leone (West Africa), Gabon and the Democratic Republic of Congo (Central Africa), and Ethiopia and Madagascar (East Africa) with a view to foster knowledge exchanges and cross-sectoral and cross-border collaboration. Three sub-regional Science-Policy-Practice platforms (SPPIs), one for each of the sub-region, are also established, and are connected through a regional (SPPI) network.

CABES First Regional (West, Central & East African) workshop

Accordingly, the first regional Workshop was successfully undertaken in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on October 25th-27th, 2022 under the theme: ''Co-developing strategies for sustainability in Africa; Utilizing products of IPBES ".

[4] www.cabes.online

The workshop was attended by National Focal Points of IPBES and the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as other policy makers, scientists and private sector representatives from over 40 countries across Western, Central and Eastern African as well as from Europe. The workshop enabled participants to learn about the CABES project framework, raised their awareness on IPBES work programs and guided them on how to engage in the initiative, and co-design pathways for further national ownership of IPBES products like the newly launched IPBES assessments on sustainable use and values. Furthermore, the workshop created opportunities for stakeholders to share their experiences on existing strategies aligned with biodiversity and ecosystem services governance, and paved the way for their further engagement.

CABES First sub-Regional (East African sub-regional) Workshop

The sub-themes of the workshop

One of the sub-themes of the workshop, the IPBES *Nature Futures Framework* (NFF), is a new conceptual framework and heuristic tool to explore plausible scenarios for a desirable future. By considering the complex properties, interactions and feedback that operate in nature, the NFF emerged from stakeholder consultations that gathered a wide range of visions of desirable futures for people and biodiversity. The NFF takes into consideration the diverse conceptualization of multiple values of nature and its benefits. The framework emphasizes the intrinsic ("nature for nature"), instrumental ("nature for society") and relational ("nature as culture"/"one with nature") values, identified as the specific values referred to in the *Methodological Assessment Report on the Diverse Values and Valuation of Nature*. The framework allows those involved in scenario-building to recognize and address, in a more explicit manner, plural values ascribed to nature and *nature's contributions to people* (NCP), which conventional scenario-building methods often fail to capture. The underlying assumption for formulating any type of desirable future vision of nature is that nature is valued much more in the future, but the reasons why it is valued – the underlying value perspectives – can vary widely. The framework is novel in that it explicitly provides a space for the inclusion of relational values within a global biodiversity scenarios framework, acknowledging that relational values, such as cultural identity, sense of place, traditions and reciprocity with nature, are often poorly represented or marginalized in assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services.
As part of the workshop sub-themes, other IPBES assessments that were launched during the tenth session of the plenary (IPBES-10[5]), including Climate and Biodiversity, and the thematic assessment of Invasive Alien Species focusing on the East African region: "Invasive Alien Species and threats to Biodiversity: knowledge, perspectives and solutions in the East African Sub-Region" were discussed. The rapidly growing threat that invasive alien species pose to biodiversity, ecosystem services, sustainable development and human well-being is, however, generally poorly quantified and little understood by decision makers.

General objective of the workshop

The sub-regional workshop was intended to raise awareness on IPBES, the CABES project, promote and enhance utilization of IPBES assessments/products, and to increase stakeholders' engagement in IPBES work programs to enable timely achievement of IPBES goals.

[5] https://www.ipbes.net/invasive-alien-species-assessment

Specific Objectives

The workshop was set to achieve the following objectives:

- Facilitate discussions with stakeholders (IPBES and UN CBD NFPs and others) to familiarize with newly released IPBES products, including the NFF, invasive alien species assessment and climate change and biodiversity.
- Promote utilization of IPBES products and participation in IPBES rolling work program up to 2030 to contribute to the achievement of the *UN Sustainable Development Goals* (UNSDGs), and the post-*2020 Global Biodiversity Framework* (GBF) targets through creating enabling environment for enhancing Science-Policy-Practice Interface.
- Create a platform to share IPBES program-based experience/develop strategies on biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services. In other words, to facilitate policy dialogues and peer-to-peer learning.
- Strengthen the sub-regional and national Biodiversity Platforms and enhance engagement and collaboration of experts in accordance with IPBES work program.

In addition to meeting the above objectives, the workshop achieved the following results:

- Enhanced awareness on IPBES and CABES project framework.
- Strengthened engagements and collaboration among experts and ownership of IPBES products by stakeholders.
- Facilitated the sharing of IPBES based experiences, assessment results and strategic frameworks.
- Enhanced awareness on assessment and strategies to control invasive alien species and encouraged NFPs to communicate the same to respective country policy makers.

Workshop Participants

A total of 40 participants from NFPs of IPBES and CBD from 17 East African Countries, and other stakeholders drawn from relevant academic communities, NGOs, the public and the private sectors, indigenous and local knowledge holders, the youth and women groups attended the two-day workshop.

Workshop Date and Venue

Date:

8-9 November 2023.

Venue:

HoAREC&N Headquarters and Jupiter International Hotel, Kazan chis, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Workshop Format:

The 2-day in-person workshop facilitated insightful presentation of assessment frameworks, results, regional and country-specific experiences, plenaries, working group discussions, plenaries and question and answer sessions. The workshop program can be found in Annex 1.

Opening and Welcoming Addresses

H.E. Prof. Eyasu Elias, Ms. Amarys Preuss, H.E. Dr. Samuel Kifle, H.E. Mr. Stephan Auer, Prof. Worash Getaneh, Dr. Isimemen Osemwegie

1. Workshop Program Introduction by Prof. Mekuria Argaw

The Director of the *Horn of Africa Environment Center and Network* (HoAREC&N) research wing, which is hosting the event, mentioned the diverse participants of the workshop after welcoming them. He reported that the workshop participants came from West, Central and East African countries, CABES team, scientists, IPBES representative, HoAREC&N team, policy makers, media, and other dignitaries.

Prof. Mekuria Argaw, Director of Horn of Africa Environment Center and Network

A cross section of participants at the workshop

2. Welcome Address by Prof. Worash Getaneh (AAU Vice president) (replacing H.E. Dr. Samuel Kifle, AAU president)

Professor Worash, Vice President of Addis Ababa University welcomed the participants. He declared that he is representing and communicating the welcoming message by Addis Ababa University president, Dr. Samuel Kifle who was absent due to overlapping assignments. He acknowledged the different partners who have contributed to the successful organization of the CABES sub-regional East Africa meeting and honoured the financial support from the German government, through the IKI climate fund.

H.E. Prof. Eyasu Elias, State Minister, the Ministry of Agriculture

Prof. Sebsebe Demissew Woodmatas, Former CO-chair, IPBES MEP

3. H.E. Mr. Stephan Auer, German Ambassador to Ethiopia (German Embassy, Addis Ababa)

In his remarks, H.E Ambassador Stephan Auer of the Republic of Germany to Ethiopia affirmed that Ethiopia is a biodiverse country in terms of fauna and flora, as well as a mosaic of civilizations, and that if protected and encouraged, it can benefit the globe. The ambassador stated that the CABES initiative is part of the Internal Climate Initiative of the Federal German Republic, and that his government is committed to addressing biodiversity loss and reducing climate-related disasters.

He recounted how his country led the international community's effort to bridge the gap between science and policy, stating that his country will continue to assist the global community's efforts to address climate change and biodiversity loss.

4. Welcome Statement by Prof. Worash Getaneh, Vice president, Addis Ababa University

Professor Worash Getaneh expresses great pleasure in seeing everyone present and extends a warm welcome to the continental capital, Addis Ababa. Ethiopia, known as the land of origin, holds significance as the birthplace of *Homo sapiens*. It has

contributed to the cultivation of crops like coffee, teff, and enset, and serves as a center of diversity for major food crops such as wheat, barley, and sorghum. Approximately **12% of its plant species** are endemic. Beyond Ethiopia, the entire Horn of Africa region stands out as a **Biodiversity Hotspot** with high levels of endemism in its flora and fauna.

It is noted that Ethiopia, as a mega-diverse country, recognizes its significant responsibility to safeguard and preserve its biodiversity resources and ecosystems. Biodiversity resources are regarded as valuable treasures, and the collective responsibility for conservation transcends the varying challenges faced by different states. Ethiopia proudly stands as one of the founding members of the *IPBES global initiative*, actively championing its noble cause. The IPBES serves as a crucial platform for integrating scientific insights into policy formulation and decision-making processes, thereby ensuring effective biodiversity conservation and sustainable utilization. Academic institutions play a pivotal role in this endeavor by fostering an environment conducive to enhancing the *Science-Policy-Practice Interface*.

Notably, staff members from Addis Ababa University, specializing in biodiversity and related disciplines, have made significant contributions throughout IPBES's establishment and ongoing work programs. Their involvement spans various capacities, including serving on the Bureau, participating in task forces, and contributing as authors to ongoing IPBES assessments.

As the President of Addis Ababa University, he express honor in hosting a significant event. The event aims to strengthen the interconnection between science and policy, promoting the utilization of IPBES products and its rolling work program up to **2030**. Recognizing the importance of the IPBES framework, they emphasize its contribution to achieving the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs) and the post-2020 *Global Biodiversity Framework* (GBF) Goals at both national and global levels.

Addis Ababa University actively participates in the capacity development program of IPBES by leading the implementation of the CASES project in the East African sub-region. Collaborating with the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, the Horn of Africa Regional Environment Center at the university ensures the successful implementation of the National Biodiversity Platform. Furthermore, he reaffirms the university's commitment to delivering the **SPIBES Masters' Program**. Hosted and run by *the Department of Plant Biology and Biodiversity Management* at the College of Natural and Computational Sciences, this program aims to foster collaborative partnerships in research and training with African and international stakeholders.

5. Welcoming address by Dr. Melesse Maryo, Director General, Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute

Dr. Melesse Maryo emphasizes the critical role of biodiversity in sustaining life on Earth, as highlighted by the *UN Secretary General* during COP 15. Biodiversity provides essential ecosystem services and contributes to human well-being, making it fundamental for achieving sustainable development goals.

During the 7th session of the IPBES plenary, the *11th Global Assessment* revealed that **one million** of the world's estimated **eight million species** face extinction, and **75% of Earth's land surface** has been altered by human activities, including **85% of wetland areas**. Ecosystem health is deteriorating at an unprecedented rate, with a credible risk of mass species extinction in the coming decades unless urgent global and national measures are implemented. The *Invasive Alien Species Assessment Report* adopted during IPBES 10 plenary in September 2023, highlights the irreversible impact of these species on biodiversity and ecosystems. These invasions result in **60% of global species extinction** and incur an annual cost of approximately **$423 billion**. The threat posed by invasive species extends across all regions, affecting both people and nature. The consequences manifest as **local and global species extinctions**, **food and water insecurity**, **health issues**, and **a diminished quality of life**. Ethiopia, for example, faces challenges from the invader weed *Prosopis juliflora*, which has already claimed **millions of hectares** in the Ethiopian Rift Valley. This invasion impacts rangelands, agricultural areas, and protected zones, including national parks, while also harming indigenous flora and fauna. Similarly, **water hyacinth** poses a threat to freshwater ecosystems and aquatic life within the country. Overall, the accelerated loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services will significantly affect economies and society at large.

The *2023 Global Risk Assessment* reveals that **60% of the top 10 risks** are directly related to **biodiversity loss** and **ecosystems degradation**. Environmental challenges dominate, with the top four risks being interconnected:

a. Failure to mitigate climate change
b. Failure of climate-change adaptation
c. Natural disasters and extreme weather events
d. Biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse

These challenges undermine livelihoods, food security, health, and global quality of life, while also posing economic and financial risks. The most vulnerable populations are increasingly exposed to disastrous consequences. Fragmented ecosystems, susceptible to climate change and natural disasters, have lost productivity in providing vital ecosystem services—essential for food, water, energy, and health security—critical for human well-being. Unfortunately, this trend is projected to be regressive, threatening economic growth.

Thankfully, global agendas now prioritize:

a. Conservation
b. Sustainable resource extraction
c. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions
d. Strengthening governance with social inclusion of marginalized communities.

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), adopted during COP 15, outlines strategies to reverse biodiversity decline and foster sustainable, resilient economies. It emphasizes **halting and reversing biodiversity loss by 2030**, ensuring sustainable management, and valuing nature's contributions to people for the benefit of future generations. In pursuit of the **2050 long-term vision of harmonious**

coexistence with nature, the GBF (*Global Biodiversity Framework*) introduces an ambitious agenda to depart from business as usual. Key targets include:

- Target 2: Conserving **30% of global land and seascapes** by 2030.
- Target 3: Restoring **30% of degraded landscapes** within the planned period.
- Target 6: Mitigating the impact of *Invasive Alien Species* (IAS) on biodiversity and ecosystem services. Insights from IPBES 10 regarding IAS play a vital role in achieving this goal.

Biodiversity financing is tripled through the GBF, aiming to mobilize **$200 billion annually** from all sources by 2030. Two new biodiversity funds pave the way for additional resources:

- **Global Biodiversity Fund**: Operationalized via a special window under the *Global Environment Facility* (GEF).
- **Global Multilateral Fund**: Equitably shares benefits from the utilization *of Digital Sequenced Information* (DSI).

To ensure inclusivity and equity, the GBF emphasizes:

- Rights of Indigenous People and Local Communities (IPLCs)
- Women and youth
- The private sector's role in achieving conservation and climate targets by 2030.

Over the past decades, the global community has expressed concern based on scientific evidence spanning various scales. The failure to achieve defined global goals related to biodiversity and climate action has raised alarms. Recognizing this urgency, global decision-making processes now emphasize the interlinkages between biodiversity loss, climate change, and development.

In this context, parties, governments, and organizations must:

- Promote science, technology, and innovation within the KM-GBF implementation.
- Support the development of biodiversity-related technologies and innovations at local, national, sub-regional, and regional levels.
- Identify and prioritize capacity-building needs, working in partnership with local communities and addressing institutional capacity at the national level.

Additionally, in the future plan with the aim **to halt biodiversity loss by 2030** and ensure **harmony with nature by 2050**, countries must collaborate with relevant stakeholders to implement the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

Key actions include:

- Fine-tuning national diagnostic reports based on scientific assessments.
- Verifying biodiversity threats and drivers of loss in selected eco-regions highlighted through national assessments. Identify economic activities responsible for biodiversity decline.
- Mapping private sector actors and other stakeholders engaged in activities that pressure biodiversity. Engage them in biodiversity conservation efforts.
- Identifying scenarios and options for stakeholder dialogues at landscape and national levels. Establish a framework for voluntary commitments to mainstream biodiversity.

- Facilitating negotiations among stakeholders and mobilizing action plans with clear targets, indicators, and institutional resources.
- Aligning stakeholders' voluntary commitments—including individuals, private sectors, and organizations—with the new NBSAP (*National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans*) to achieve the 2030 biodiversity agenda. Foster greater interaction among government ministries, economic sectors, and society.
- Strengthening the role of local communities and enhancing stakeholder engagement to ensure effective biodiversity conservation.
- Reinforcing the new NBSAPs, including their adoption as whole-of-government policy instruments.

To address these mounting challenges, governments must establish a comprehensive framework of policies, institutions, and legislation that tackles the root causes of ecosystem degradation and biodiversity loss. Events like this workshop play a critical role in uniting relevant stakeholders.

They provide an opportunity to:

- Stay informed about the scale of biodiversity loss challenges.
- Deliberate on effective action modalities.
- Propose prospective interventions.

6. Opening Keynote speech H.E. Prof. Eyasu Elias, State Minister, the Ministry of Agriculture, Ethiopia

Prof. Eyasu Elias opened the workshop in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The workshop addressed pressing issues related to ecosystem degradation, agricultural expansion, and climate change impacts in the eastern Africa sub-region, particularly the Horn of Africa. Despite its natural beauty and cultural diversity, the Horn of Africa faces significant challenges, including the loss of biodiversity resources and ecosystem services. Factors such as habitat destruction, resource over-exploitation, climate change, and invasive species threaten the region's delicate ecosystems.

He emphasized the importance of cross-border collaboration in addressing environmental challenges. Strengthening policies, sharing best practices, and enhancing biodiversity conservation efforts are critical. The *Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services* (IPBES) plays a vital role by providing scientific information and guidance to policymakers for informed decision-making on environmental conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity resources.

Recognizing the need for capacity development, *the Capacity Development for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Service* (CABES) network strives to enhance technical and scientific expertise in biodiversity research and conservation. The Ethiopian government also acknowledges the valuable work of the *Horn of Africa Regional Environment Center and Network* (HoAREC&N) in capacity building, training, research, and data generation, which forms the foundation for evidence-based conservation efforts.

The example set by the people and Government of Ethiopia serves as a classical illustration of national biodiversity conservation efforts. *Ethiopia's Climate Resilient Green Economy* (CRGE) Strategy aims to achieve economic growth while pursuing climate-neutral development pathways. Recently, Prime Minister Abi Ahmed launched *the Green Legacy Initiative* (GLI) in Ethiopia, resulting in the planting of **25 billion seedlings** within a four-year period (2020–2022). The GLI's second phase, initiated in 2023, aims to plant an additional **25 billion forest, fodder, and fruit seedlings**, with **7.5 billion seedlings** already planted during the past rainy season. Through community mobilization and efficient resource utilization, **tens of thousands of hectares of degraded forest ecosystems** have been restored through afforestation, terracing, and conservation efforts. He emphasized that their current journey is part of a broader mission to effectively utilize IPBES assessments and integrate their findings into national policies. By doing so, they can enhance their capacity to conserve and sustainably manage biodiversity and ecosystem services—the very essence of nature's contributions to humanity.

Presentations and Discussions

Presentations and Discussions – Day One

1. Icebreaker, Dr. Jennifer Hauck:

Participants of the workshop

Participants were introduction by their regions and countries of origin.
West Africa Region: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone
Central Africa Region: Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, The Republic of the Congo.
East Africa Region: Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda.
Friends of CABES: Other parts of Africa and Europe

Participants of the workshop during the NFF exercise

Ms. Amarys Preuss, IPBES stakeholder Engagement Officer

2. African Biodiversity, Ecosystem Systems and Policies: East Africa Perspective by Prof. Sebsebe Demissew:

The presentation defines biodiversity in terms of variation of life forms within a given ecosystem, with an ecosystem being the sum of all the organisms in a given area as well as the abiotic factors with which they interact; sustainable development; African vegetation types and hotspots; IPBES Science-Policy platform; Challenges and Opportunities and concluded with remarks. The presentation underscores the importance of Biodiversity for the sustenance of life and as an indicator of the health of a given environment. With Africa being the second largest continent of 30 Mio. Sq. km land mass, the presentation reflected on Africa's diverse topography, climate and vegetation, ranging from extremely dry and hot deserts in the Sahara and Kalahari to hot and very humid rain forest on the slopes of Mt. Cameroon and cool, high mountains in the Eastern Africa. He outlined the rationale for biodiversity hotspot classification such as a biodiversity hotspot region must meet two strict criteria:

- It must have at least 1,500 vascular plants as endemics - it must have a high percentage of plant life found nowhere else on the planet - it is irreplaceable.
- It must have 30% or less of its original natural vegetation - and must be threatened.

Globally there are 36 areas considered as hotspots, with the Horn of Africa having 2 of the 36 global Biodiversity hotspots. He drew attention to the Regional Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services: Africa that has evidenced pressure on Africa's natural assets.
The presentation underscores the options Africa has to create a sustainable future together seizing on opportunities such as:

- Documentation (Ethiopia has taken upon the challenge to conduct its national Ecosystem assessment
- Identification of national and regional experts (NFP)
- National ecosystem assessments
- Regional and international collaboration
- Involvement in IPBES processes
- Involvement in Natures Future Framework

Participants of the workshop

Participants of the workshop during the Nature's Future Framework exercise

The presentation concluded by drawing attention to the need to enhance and build capacity of Africa's Biodiversity Research and Higher Education Capacity; Address the challenges to Biodiversity (anthropogenic factors (incl. population increase); Invasive (Introduced) species; over exploitation and degradation; protection of protected areas; climate change); collaboration between various disciplines (natural and social sciences) and also South-South and North-South collaboration; establishment of Centers of Excellence (Biodiversity Centre of Excellence); Commitment by national international funding agencies to enhance research Capacity.
The presentation ended with a quote from Tanzania's Former President H.E. Julius Kambarage Nyerere:

> "THE SURVIVAL OF OUR WILDLIFE IS A MATTER OF GRAVE CONCERN TO ALL OF US IN AFRICA. THESE WILD CREATURES AMID THE WILD PLACES THEY INHABIT ARE NOT ONLY IMPORTANT AS A SOURCE OF WONDER AND INSPIRATION, BUT ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES AND OUR FUTURE LIVELIHOOD AND WELL-BEING."

3. Capacity development to support the implementation and uptake of the IPBES Products: CABES and its SPIBES Program, Dr. Isimemen Osemwegie

Dr. Isimemen Osemwegie, University of Bonn

How it all began – The WABES project

The presentation shaded light on the genesis of CABES and its SPIBES Programs as a means to uptaking IPBES products. The initiative began with the creation of *West African Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services* (WABES) with a duration of 5 years (Feb. 2017 - Jan. 2022) ext. July 2022. The countries involved included 15 ECOWAS member states. It is coordinated by *Center for Development Research* (ZEF), University of Bonn, Germany with funding from *Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety & Consumer Protection* (BMUV)

The aim was to facilitate capacity building across West Africa in support of the work program of IPBES based on two components. This includes firstly the education and training component: SPIBES MSc Program – Managing Science-Policy Interface on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for sustainable development – University of Félix Houphouët-Boigny, Cote d'Ivoire. The second component is networking that includes the formation of a sub-regional platform to engage with IPBES National Focal Points.

The Initiative's success stories:

- IPBES membership (accession of Sierra Leone as 133rd member state in Nov. 2019),
- Strengthened engagement with IPBES processes increased (3 in-person & 6 virtual workshops with 400+ participants),
- WABES lend its voice to halt the declassification of the classified Kua forest, Burkina Faso
- 30 SPIBES Alumni from Université Felix Houphouet-Boigny, Côte d'Ivoire
- It has facilitated science uptake into domestic policy (Policy impact) Niger and Côte d'Ivoire

Who we are - CABES program in brief

Capacity Development for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (CABES) are experts across Africa with focus on West, Central & East Africa. The project is slated to take 8 years (15 Feb., 2022 - 31 Jan., 2030) and coordinated by the *Center for Development Research* (ZEF), University of Bonn, Germany with funding from *International Climate Initiative* (IKI) of the *German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety & Consumer Protection* (BMUV).

CABES – Theory of change

Through targeted capacity development initiatives & networking opportunities, the project as designed to deliver SPIBES MSc. Program for early-careers, and Science-Policy-Practice Platforms for BES at National, sub-Regional & Regional scales, and CABES Capacity Development Program -*for professionals*. Implementing this is expected to lead to increased awareness & engagement with IPBES, and Intra-continental Collaborations. This in turn will lead to the sustainable use & conservation of biodiversity and achieve the result of the needed transformative change & policy reforms. CABES aims to support the contributions of African stakeholders to IPBES, and the uptake of its assessments and tools. The goals of CABES are to be achieved through:

1. **Education & training component**

- Train early-career experts through establishment of SPIBES MSc. Programs
- Develop capacities of professionals to support the implementation of political decisions for the management & sustainable use of BES

2. **Networking component**

- Inform BES decision-making processes through the establishment of national biodiversity platforms
- Establish sub-regional/regional networks of SPPIs to contribute to the implementation of the IPBES work programs

CABES – Capacity Development Component

Through Capacity Development: SPIBES MSc. Program on "Science-Policy Interfaces for Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services"

CEA-CCBAD, UFHB, Côte d'Ivoire (West Africa), FSA-UNILU, Democratic Republic of Congo (Central Africa); and HOA-REC&N, University of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (East Africa)

- 110 graduate students (early-career experts)
- Creation of CABES e-learning portal
- Face-to-face courses
- Train the trainers
- 35 online courses; 1000+ trained

Updates:

SPIBES MSc., UFHB Côte d'Ivoire (West Africa):

- Program accredited
- 23 students are enrolled from 23 African countries - West Africa (15 ECOWAS member states); Central Africa (DRC, Chad, Zambia, Zimbabwe) and East Africa (Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Kenya). They are in their 3rd semester – scheduled to graduate 2024 and call for applications planned for mid-January, 2024

SPIBES MSc., UNILU, DRC (Central Africa):

- Accreditation process initialized,
- Call for applications planned for mid-January, 2024

SPIBES MSc., AAU, Ethiopia (East Africa):

- Accreditation process initialized,
- Call for applications planned for mid-January, 2024
- First Face-to-face training on:" Utilization of IPBES assessment outcomes in national policy making", jointly organized with the Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN) conducted on Nov. 6 & 7, 2023 at the HoAREC&N Center

CABES – Capacity Development II: updates

- Needs assessment concluded: 12 priority courses planned for 2023/24/25
- First course (online) on train the trainers: 17 &18. October 2023
- Launch of CABES e-learning portal.
- Second online course on establishing national platforms in January 16 & 17 2024

Core topics and course year

Course Year 2023

- Train the trainers: Developing, organizing & teaching online courses on different topics
- Developing national & regional SPPIs and networks

Course Year 2024

- Setting up a MSc. program on SPIBES 2024
- Fundraising and business plan writing
- Interactions of the science of Biodiversity and Climate Change

Course Year 20204 -2025

- Conducting ecosystem assessments including different concepts, values and types of knowledge 2024-25

- Opportunities for and benefits of engaging in the IPBES work pprogramme2024/25
- Promoting gender balance in SPPIs
- Engagement strategies, methods and tools to include ILK holders in SPPIs
- Utilization of IPBES assessment outcomes in national policy making

Course Year 2025

- Biodiversity conservation and restoration strategies (incl. monitoring) 2025
- Mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services in national policies and strategies

CABES Networking Component

This is expected to serve 38+ Africa countries

National Platforms: Cabo Verde, Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Madagascar.

Networking: SPPIs for Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services (BES) has two target areas:

- **Stakeholders – IPBES Connections**: promote knowledge transfer, dialogues & co-production of policy engagement pathways of IPBES processes & assessments
- **Science-Policy-Practice Connections**: facilitate in-country and cross-border collaborations for Biodiversity conservation: - Establishment of a "network of platforms" at different geographic scales

Updates on networking component:

- At National level, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Côte d'Ivoire have conducted their landscape reviews
- Madagascar & Gabon have started their landscape reviews.
- Sierra Leone will start soon.
- Côte d'Ivoire is at the last stage of establishing its national biodiversity platform!

CABES – Networking SPPIs - sub-Regional/Regional Platforms:

- Uptake event: First regional workshop (130 participants from 43 countries):
- Increased awareness of IPBES
- Accession of the Republic of Guinea as the 141st member of IPBES

Series of online workshops (3):

- Engaging experts in the review of the FOD of Nexus Assessment & Transformative Change Assessment (~44 comments each)
- Information event with IPBES NFPs ahead of the IPBES-10 Plenary

Partnerships/Collaborations established and/or been initialized. Visit www.cabes.online for details on the program.

4. IPBES rolling work programs and products: IPBES 10 and Ahead: Participation and Stakeholder engagement by Ms. Amarys Preuss, Stakeholder Engagement Officer, IPBES

What is IPBES and why does it matter?

The *Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services* (IPBES):

1. In 2012, a group of almost 100 UN Member States decided to establish IPBES as an independent intergovernmental body. This means that IPBES is not a UN agency or under any other organization – it answers only to its members, of which there are now 143.

2. The mission of IPBES is to strengthen knowledge foundations for better policy through science – aiming to ensure that biodiversity is conserved and sustainably used for human well-being and sustainable development.
3. What this actually means is that IPBES does for biodiversity almost the same as the IPCC does for climate change: we respond to specific requests from Governments to provide decision-makers with the best possible evidence about biodiversity and its contributions to people – AND we offer options for responses to these challenges based again on the best available science.
4. People often ask if this means that our target audience is only those in Government – but there are decision-makers in every sphere – in business, academia, finance, education, healthcare, agriculture and even every one of us in our own community and home. So, the IPBES target audience is much wider than only Government leaders. An independent intergovernmental body, established by Governments in 2012 – currently 145 Members.

In response to requests from Governments, IPBES provides policymakers with objective scientific assessments about the state of knowledge regarding:

- The planet's biodiversity, ecosystems and their contributions to people
- Tools & methods to protect and sustainably use these vital natural assets
- Provides options for responses based on the best-available science.
- IPBES does for biodiversity what the IPCC does for climate change

Why Does IPBES Matter?

For a layman, the idea of biodiversity can sound very academic and distant. But biodiversity matters to every person every day.

1. This is because biodiversity and Nature's Contributions to People (NCPs) underpin all of the things that we care about and that we need for our quality of life.
2. BUT these contributions are being degraded faster now that at any other time in our history…which is what makes the work that IPBES does so important…and directly relevant to you, and your organizations.

Biodiversity & NCPs underpin almost every aspect of human development, including production of food, clean water, climate regulation, disease control. Yet they are being depleted & degraded faster now than at any point in human history.

IPBES is unique:

- Harnessing best expertise from across disciplines & knowledge communities
- Providing policy-relevant knowledge and options for responses
- Catalyzing implementation of knowledge-based policies at all levels of Government, the private sector and civil society

How is IPBES structured?

1. The highest decision-making body is the Plenary, made up of representatives of our 143-member States and usually meets once a year
2. It is at the Plenary sessions that the draft IPBES Assessment Reports are considered by the member States and the Summaries of each gets discussed line by line before being accepted as a formal intergovernmental product of IPBES.

3. All UN States that are not yet members of IPBES are automatically Observers to the Plenary, along with other biodiversity related organizations and conventions, UN bodies and other agencies that apply for formal accreditation. Observers are not entitled to vote in the Plenary sessions.

Then there are our stakeholders. Any individual or organization that can benefit from the work of IPBES or contribute to our work is considered to be an IPBES Stakeholder – which is a very wide definition.

The Plenary

- Governing body of IPBES
- Made up of member States
- Usually meets once per year

Observers to the Plenary

- States not yet Members
- Biodiversity-related conventions (e.g. CBD)
- Related UN bodies
- Other accredited organizations & agencies

All contributors to & end-users of IPBES outputs

Completed IPBES assessments

1. In the first ten years of IPBES' work, the Platform completed and published 10 multi-year Assessment Reports – each the product of 3-4 years of work by hundreds of the world's leading scientists and knowledge holders from every region of the globe.
2. In 2016 the first IPBES Reports published were on Pollination and Food Production & on Scenarios and Models. In 2017 there were 4 Regional Assessment Reports – one each for Africa, Asia-Pacific, the Americas and Europe and Central Asia – and a Report on Land Degradation and Restoration. In 2019, IPBES published the landmark Global Assessment Report – the first of its kind since the *Millennium Ecosystem Assessment* in 2005. Last year, IPBES published two Reports – one on the Sustainable Use of Wild Species and another on the Diverse Values and Valuation of Nature.

REACH

The 2019 *Global Assessment*:

- Over 55,000 online articles across 188 countries in 59 languages
- 9,440+ different online news sites

The 2023 *Invasive Alien Species Assessment*:

- Released 4 September 2023, already 4,300 online articles across 113 countries in 49 languages
- 2,000+ different online news sites
- Before impact, there is reach, that is how far the knowledge of what IPBES does can be transmitted.

This is quite wide, even if the IPBES name is still a little less known than that of its cousin the IPCC.

The Global Assessment, published in 2019 and introducing the state and challenges of biodiversity and ecosystem services worldwide for the first time, achieved incredible reach when published:

1. It led on the front pages and main news bulletins of almost every major media outlet around the world – more than 55,000 online articles, across 188 countries

2. It made it into popular culture – being featured on shows like the Jimmy Kimmel Show, Trevor Noah and John Oliver
3. It even beat the birth of the UK Royal Baby Archie on the day he was born as the first news item on BBC 7pm news! [+/- 14.30]

On social media, the reach was even more successful – with more than 33 million impressions and massive influencer interaction by people like, the UN SG, Hilary Clinton, Al Gore, the Pope, Greta Thunberg, Leonardo di Caprio etc.

Our most recent assessment, the Invasive Alien Species Assessment, published just 3 weeks ago, was also very well remarked by the media and influencers worldwide, with already 4 000+ articles worldwide.

Impact: what actually changes?

Governments

Political change:

- Nigerian national policy on endangered pollinators (2021)
- DRC creates national biodiversity and ecosystem services task force (2018)

Regional cooperation:

- Ministers adopt common continental position on biodiversity protection and land degradation at African Summit (2018)

Advocacy:

- WWF "Act on Nature" call to world leaders cites the IPBES Global Assessment (2020)
- The South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) advocates for immediate action to protect biodiversity (2021)

Education:

- Chicago public schools use Global Assessment media release in educational project for grade 10 curriculum (2021)

Tools

Technological advances:

- New AI Chat Tool launched focused on climate & biodiversity based on data from IPBES & IPCC (2023)

Methodological tools:

- Land Degradation Knowledge from IPBES Applied in New Study on Degraded Landscapes in Tanzania (2023)

Finance:

- World Bank Group report on mobilizing private finance for nature incorporates findings from IPBES Global Assessment (2020)

Business:

- 30 Johannesburg Stock Exchange-Listed Companies Launch Assessments valuing South African biodiversity for business (2019)

The Two Oceans Aquarium in South Africa announced that it has joined the Global Coalition

NOTES

Even more significant than the reach of IPBES products has been their ongoing impacts. IPBES collects examples of specific impact, at every scale, in every region, all accessible in a *public impact tracking database* that we call TRACK. Here are only a handful of the examples of what happens when people take up the work of IPBES: members of parliament have been trained to the question of biodiversity, in France and Switzerland, new tech tools consider the enormous amount of knowledge collected in the IPBES reports, civil society takes up advocacy based on the reports' key messages and schools develop new curricula for the children. Businesses and financial organizations to take IPBES work into account, and have taken steps to develop their strategies based on the assessment reports key messages.

We encourage you to explore TRACK, to see the kinds of impacts that IPBES has, and even to contribute any examples you know of to our database. And more so even, we would love to have you contribute to it, showcasing what has been done in your country or in the Central Asian region, in terms of making a change based on an IPBES report key messages

IPBES Main outcomes

BES 10 Outcomes opportunities there are for you to engage with IPBES yourself…

1) Assessing knowledge
2) Adoption of the Invasive Alien Species report
3) Scoping for 2nd Global Assessment
4) Fast track assessments:
   (1) monitoring biodiversity and nature's contributions to people
   (2) biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning
5) Call for further inputs on work program after IPBES 11, for decision at IPBES 12
6) Increase collaboration with IPCC
7) Technical support
8) ToRs for the task forces on: Indigenous and local knowledge / Scenarios and models / Data and Knowledge / Capacity building
9) Call to IPBES members, experts and relevant stakeholders for inputs on the future role of the policy support function

- The IPBES rolling work program up to 2030 Adopted at IPBES 7 (2019), additional topics at IPBES 10 (2023)
- 6 prioritized topics
- 6 objectives

TOPIC 1

- Assessing the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food, health, energy and climate change: *"Nexus assessment"*

TOPIC 2

- Understanding the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity

TOPIC 3

- Measuring business impact and dependence on biodiversity and nature's contributions to people

TOPIC 4

- Assessing biodiversity and ecosystem Services (2nd Global Assessment)

TOPIC 5

- Monitoring biodiversity and ecosystem services

TOPIC 6

- Biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning and ecological connectivity

Timeline for ongoing and future IPBES assessments

- Invasive alien species (2023)
- Nexus: Biodiversity, water, food and health (2024)
- Determinants of transformative change (2024)
- Business and biodiversity (2025)
- Nexus: Biodiversity, water, food and health (2028)
- Monitoring Biodiversity and Nature's Contributions to People (2026)
- Integrated biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning and ecological connectivity (2027)

Stakeholder engagement in the work program

National Focal Points

- National Focal Points (NFP) facilitate interaction between Governments and IPBES between sessions of the Plenary and represent their country at the Plenary meetings

Main functions:

- Nominating experts
- Review of draft assessments and other deliverables
- Supporting the uptake of competed assessments

Available resources:

- The IPBES manual for national focal points[6]
- Notifications[7]
- Receive notifications by email à create an account on IPBES website and register for the IPBES mailing list[8]
- NFPs receive additional communications from the secretariat

1. Nominations of qualified experts to assist with various tasks approved by the Plenary, including the scoping or preparation of a new assessment or to serve as members of a task force.

Prior to the call for nominations of experts:

- Communication of the role and added value of participating as an expert in IPBES assessments at all relevant national events;
- Identification of funding to support the participation of experts in IPBES assessments, for experts from countries not eligible for support (e.g., compensation for working hours and travel cost)

During the call for nomination of experts:

- Wide communication of the IPBES call for nomination of experts to all relevant stakeholders through various channels, including email lists, websites and social media;

[6] https://www.ipbes.net/document-library-catalogue/ipbes-manual-national-focal-points
[7] https://ipbes.net/notifications
[8] https://ipbes.net/user/register

- Active search for experts, contacting them directly when relevant;
- Provision of support to experts on how to complete the application form on the IPBES portal;
- Screening of the nomination list using a set of criteria for selection and development of a final list of nominees;
- Confirmation of the nomination of experts through the IPBES portal.

2. Drafts of IPBES assessments (multiple times).

Examples:

- Distribution of the IPBES notification to a broad network of relevant stakeholders and/or more targeted groups and communities with general and/or more specific information;
- Use of different social media platforms to communicate with relevant groups and networks about the IPBES review processes, by retweeting/reposting messages from the IPBES secretariat or crafting and issuing targeted messages;
- Organization of information meeting(s) for a wider audience and/or dialogue meeting(s) with invited participants;
- Establishment of a core group of experts with relevant expertise from different organizations, Government agencies and ministries to discuss comments and further consider the draft documents and other issues raised;
- Coordination with, where established, the national science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services to reach out to a broad group of relevant experts, practitioners and policymakers.

3. Supporting the uptake of complete assessments

- Approval and launch of an IPBES assessment
- IPBES press conference
- Launch events for laid-out versions in different languages
- Uptake events
- Vary in scope, focus, format and audience
- Usually hosted by Governments or institutions and organizations in the wider IPBES community

Examples (types of uptake events):

- Lunch briefings at the institution of the NFP
- Half-day seminars or workshops with other ministries and agencies
- National/(sub)regional IPBES conferences or dialogues for a wider audience of practitioners and policymakers
- Can focus on all key findings of an IPBES assessment report or key findings relevant for one or several sector(s) and/or topic(s)

National platforms:

- National platforms on biodiversity and ecosystem services may provide an asset for national focal points:
- Help to engage effectively with a broad audience
- Providing a pool of resources that can be drawn upon to support and supplement the work of the national focal point

- Structure and modus operandi of different platforms vary greatly, but they have in common that they provide a space for:
    - Sharing information with national experts and other knowledge-holders, practitioners, and decision- and policymakers about IPBES processes, products, and how to engage with its work; and
    - Coordinating and collaborating on joint activities related to IPBES and other biodiversity-related topics to strengthen the national science-policy interface.

Examples of activities undertaken by these platforms to augment the work of NFPs include:

- Identification, nomination and mobilization of experts and other stakeholders to take part in the production, review and use of IPBES deliverables;
- Organization of uptake events to disseminate information about IPBES and key messages from IPBES deliverables;
- Mobilization of national efforts to address knowledge gaps identified in IPBES assessments;
- Organization of capacity-building events to strengthen individual and institutional capacities at the national level for engaging with the work of IPBES; and
- Coordination and implementation of national activities related to the work of IPBES and the wider biodiversity agenda, such as the undertaking of national ecosystem assessments.

Stakeholders:

IPBES stakeholders are both contributors to and end-users of IPBES outputs

- **Contributors:** knowledge-holders, scientists & practitioners…
- **End-users:** policy-makers, businesses & communities…

Stakeholders can:

- Contribute to the activities of the work program through experience, expertise, knowledge & data, etc.;
- Use or benefit from outputs of the work program;
- Encourage and support the participation of scientists and knowledge-holders in the work of the Platform.

There is a well-organized Stakeholder community – including two self-organized networks of IPBES Stakeholders, a detailed stakeholder engagement strategy, regular stakeholder activities and events and an annual IPBES Stakeholder Day before every session of the Plenary.

- IPBES stakeholders are both contributors to and end-users of IPBES outputs
- They are knowledge holders, scientists, practitioners, policy makers, businesses, civil society organizations and individuals
- They contribute their knowledge and expertise to the work of IPBES, and they can take up the messages contained in the IPBES products

Get involved in the assessment's process

Policies, advocacies, and practice changes.

Call for expert nominations

- Apply to serve as an expert or a fellow
- Participate in the IPBES early career Fellows Program

External review periods

- Register to be a reviewer
- Submit comments on the chapters and SPM

Stakeholder dialogue workshops

- Discuss key points and questions with authors and experts
- Support knowledge-building work by contributing expertise, data or other resources

Adoption at Plenary

- Contribute to your National Focal Point/National delegation's expertise

After publication

- Use and help disseminate key findings and outcomes of the assessment
- Use IPBES Reports to help inform your own decision-making
- Organize an uptake event
- There are several occasions to contribute to an assessment, even if you are not a lead scientific author.
- At the beginning of the assessment process, IPBES issues a call for expert nominations, these become the authors of the reports.
- At least twice during the assessment drafting, there are open review periods, in which people can access draft versions of the documents and provide input, adding their own knowledge to this immense collective effort
- Reports are adopted at Plenary by IPBES members, who are state representatives. Stakeholders can engage ahead of time with their own governments to contribute their expertise to the country's position on the report, and enrich the plenary talks
- Finally, and very importantly, after publication, you can use the reports in your own line of work, whether you are policy makers, advocacy organizations or just individuals wanting to make a change.
- Disseminate the work of IPBES, through what we call uptake events. Uptake events are events organized by any stakeholder, in which you address your constituents, whomever they are, to share the work of IPBES, encourage dissemination or action.
- We at the IPBES secretariat are happy to help you in these, whether it's presenting IPBES and its work, like I'm doing today, putting you in touch with experts on a given assessment or topic, or contributing materials, such as the report summaries for policy makers.
- For all of these, I am your primary contact at IPBES, and I can connect you with the most relevant people according to your need.

Open calls

- There are several occasions to contribute to an assessment, even if you are not a lead scientific author.
- At the beginning of the assessment process, IPBES issues a call for expert nominations, these become the authors of the reports.
- At least twice during the assessment drafting, there are open review periods, in which people can access draft versions of the documents and provide input, adding their own knowledge to this immense collective effort
- Reports are adopted at Plenary by IPBES members, who are state representatives. Stakeholders can engage ahead of time with their own governments to contribute their expertise to the country's position on the report, and enrich the plenary talks
- Finally, after publication, you can use the reports in your own line of work, whether you are policy makers, advocacy organizations or just individuals wanting to make a change.

- Encourage you to disseminate the work of IPBES, through uptake events. Uptake events are events organized by any stakeholder, in which you address your constituents, whomever they are, to share the work of IPBES, encourage dissemination or action.
- IPBES secretariat is ready to help whether it is presenting IPBES, putting you in touch with experts on a given assessment or topic, or contributing materials, such as the report summaries for policy makers.
- For all of these, the presenter is the primary contact at IPBES, and can connect interested persons with the most relevant people according to needs.

Other opportunities to engage with IPBES include:

- Working with National Focal Point to help spread IPBES research and calls for inputs across your country
- Supporting capacity & knowledge-building work by contributing expertise, data or other resources.
- Organizing an IPBES-related event
- Contributing to the impact-tracking database
- Joining as an IPBES Stakeholder (www.ipbes.net/stakeholders) to receive and disseminate all relevant information
- Contributing to Stakeholder Day and the Plenary Stakeholders' Opening Statement
- Helping to communicate and amplify IPBES work via social media (@ipbes)

A day by and for stakeholders:

- Agenda decided by stakeholders' self-organized networks
- Finalization of the Stakeholders' Opening Statement at IPBES10 Plenary (drafted by Onet and IIFBES)
- 300+ stakeholders and IPBES delegates meet for informal exchanges on the eve of Plenary

5. Road to Vision 2050 Prof. Mekuria Argaw and Dr. Jennifer Hauck

6. The NFF for Plausible Futures: Alternative pathways to Vision 2050 Prof. Mekuria Argaw

The NFF for Plausible Futures: Alternative pathways to Vision 2050. Report from this exercise can be found on our website.

7. World Cafe with working groups on NFF, Dr. Jennifer Hauck "Feedback from working groups in plenary Participants. Prof. Mylor Shutcha Regional and sub-regional BES Platforms/Networks: Significance and role in enhancing IPBES products uptake, Dr. Sylvestre Da "

The Outline of the presentation covered

- Definition of SPPI and experts' platforms
- The CABES BES platforms framework
- Role of the platforms

What are Science-Policy-Practice Interfaces (SPPIs)?

- SPPIs are the many ways in which scientists, policy-makers and others link up to communicate, exchange ideas, and jointly develop knowledge to enrich policy and decision-making processes and/or research
- SPPIs aim to deliver authoritative outputs that are "policy relevant but not policy prescriptive". Such as reports of IPCC, IPBES
- SPPI platforms must be perceived as legitimate, relevant, and transparent.

Forms of SPPIs:

1. Formal - institutionalized bodies such as IPBES or informal and flexible relationships that could include: advisory boards, seminar series, workshops and focus group discussions
2. One-off or time bound: this include exercises such as national ecosystem assessments, interfaces for research project to periodic assessment such as Global Biodiversity Outlook or semi-permanent institutions such as national biodiversity platforms
3. Large international bodies to small groups or individual relationships

Who are the P & P in SPPIs?

There are policy makers operating at various levels: employees of the ministries, and other administrative institutions, local decision-making bodies, extension officers, consultant and thematic experts, members of NGOs, land managers, city administrators like Mayors, farmers, foresters, fishermen and others.

Framework - CABES Sub-regional and Regional SPPI Platforms:

Established "network of platforms" at different scales

- 8 national platforms
- Cabo Verde, Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso, Côte d 'Ivoire, Gabon, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Madagascar
- 3 sub-regional platforms – West Africa, Central Africa & East Africa
- 1 Regional platform (Network of platforms)

Objective of forming regional and sub-regional expert platforms on SPPIs

- Facilitate options to exchange and build networks amongst West, Central, and Eastern African experts
- Provide baseline knowledge on the IPBES work program and recent IPBES developments
- Show possibilities to get involved in IPBES processes
- Act as an interface between West, Central, and Eastern African countries and IPBES
- Indicate options for the uptake of IPBES contents for national and regional policy instruments

Role of Regional & Sub-regional platforms in Advancing IPBES Work programs and Enhancing uptake of IPBES products

- Prepare delegates to actively participants IPBES plenaries
- Mobilize experts for IPBES calls (revisions, authors, fellowships, etc.)
- Capacity building of the experts, in particular NFPs
- Supports NFPs in the implementations of IPBES outputs (assessments at national levels)
- Platforms are also space for sharing experiences
- Mentorship program for IPBES memberships
- Improve communications among experts, sharing IPBES calls, etc.

- Develop products that easy to use by decisions makers (policy briefs, factsheets.)
- Database: sources of information and documents
- Workshops regional & sub regional: physical or virtual: 23/11/2023 on review of Nexus assessment
- Interactive social networks at sub-regional and regional levels for continue exchanges (WhatsApp groups, social medias, etc.)
- NFPs of their home countries to develop relevant national research topics
- Sustainability of the platforms

Platform coordination

- Regional Platform & West Africa: West African Science Service Centre on Climate Change & Adapted Land Use (WASCAL), Burkina Faso (Sie Sylvestre DA). African Center of Excellence on Climate Change, Biodiversity & Sustainable Agriculture (CEA-CCBAD), Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny (UFHB), Côte d'Ivoire (Souleymane KONATE, N'Golo KONE & Kouakou KOUADIO).
- Central Africa: Faculty of Agronomic Sciences, Université de Lubumbashi (FSA-UNILU), Democratic Republic of Congo (Mylor Ngoy SHUTCHA & Paul KAZABA)
- East Africa: Horn of Africa Regional Environment Center & Network (HoAREC&N), Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia (Mekuria Argaw & Mekonnen Biru)

9. Breakout groups: Coordinating effective participation in the CABES sub regional platforms, Dr. Sylvestre Da

Working Group on and Sub-regional Platforms

Questions:

1. *Do you know any existing platform or working group on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (BES) or related matters in your sub-region?* (focus on East Africa)
2. *In your sub-region, what stakeholders (scientists, policy makers, practitioners, the private sector, NGOs, ILK holders) do you think should be included in BES regional and sub-regional platforms under the CABES project?*
3. *What activities could you propose to make sub-regional platforms operational and sustainable?*
4. *Can you offer suggestions on how IPBES can encourage the use of policy tools and methods in the field of biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services in your country, region, or both?*

Presentations and Discussions – Day Two

1. Recap of Day 1 sessions, Dr. Jennifer Hauck

2. Updates on National Platforms, Mr. Abisha Mapendembe

3. Updates from National Platform Countries, IPBES NFPs, Ethiopian National Biodiversity Platforms Experience, Dr. Feleke Woldeyes

4. Panel Discussion on Experience from Non-IPBES countries (Djibouti, Mauritius, Rwanda, and South Sudan) on National Platforms & potential for National Platform establishment Mr. Abisha Mapendembe/Dr. Paul

Panelists from the three countries were asked to discuss the efforts with regard to the establishment of biodiversity platforms and its impact on science-to-policy interaction in their respective countries.
The participants have presented their perspective on the status of the challenge on biodiversity resources at the global level as well as the need for the collaboration and cooperation among countries, which are not immune from transboundary biodiversity impacts.

5. Invasive Alien Species and threats to Biodiversity: knowledge, perspectives and solutions in the East African sub-region, Ms. Betty Rono, IPBES Fellow

A presentation on the recent IPBES report on biodiversity assessment that focus on invasive alien species which was released on September 4th 2023. The 56-page report which is presented as policy summary for policy makers is the summary of over 13,000 publications across the globe and is compiled by experts from multiple disciplines.

The IPBES report on invasive alien species reaffirms that Invasive Alien Species is **one of the five drivers of biodiversity loss in the world**. The five drivers of biodiversity loss are:

1. *Invasive alien species*
2. *Land use and sea-use change/ habitat change*
3. *Direct exploitation of organisms /unsustainable utilization*
4. *Climate change and*
5. *Pollution*

In the presentation it is reported the economic impact of invasive alien species in terms of the projection of GDP loss as a result. In Ethiopia the invasive alien species are encroaching in to the agriculture land, pasture land and protected areas where they compete with the native species and cause their demise.

The protection of invasive species is diverse as the context and capacities of different countries is diverse, the need for collaboration and cooperation as invasive alien species impact cross

boundaries and as well as due to the dynamicity of changes to come. As a result, the presenter advocated for strategies and actions to be quite **different from business as usual**.

The presenter mentioned the scores of sustainable development goals and associated targets that are aligned with the effort to protect biodiversity and ecosystem services, **the IPBES effort is congruent with Target 3 and Target 6.**

The IPBES effort is aimed at facilitating, promoting and enhancing scientific and credible independent findings, as well as assessments on biodiversity to inform the policy making at global level. The presenter underlined the existing silos would be broken by the IPBES effort and **pave way for a concerted and integrated effort**.
The interdependence of biodiversity and climate change demands an integrated and synergetic solution and that is why the IPBES is increasingly intuiting countries to join for a global concerted effort to preserve biodiversity. The IPBES is now a platform of intergovernmental partnership on biodiversity and ecosystem **services with 145 countries from the whole world**.

The presenter reported the impending irreparable damage human activities are posing on biodiversity, mentioning the wider evidences of corral bleaching due to the rising temperature, which is causing the aquatic habitats to be unsuitable for the aquatic life.
Lastly the IPBES UN representative reported on call for nominations for fellows for the methodological assessment on monitoring biodiversity and nature's contributions to people assessment. She reiterated the countries responsiveness and active participation in the multi-disciplinary assessment of IPBES.

6. Strategies for the uptake of IPBES assessments in national policy making: Outcome from the face-to-face training, Participants of the face-to-face training

Using strategies and tactics for the utilization of useful policy options
Four working groups were formed to brainstorm on tactics and strategies for:
(1) raising awareness about IPBES, products in national level;
(2) identifying key points to be considered for controlling Invasive Alien species
(3), reflecting on how to organize a national ecosystem assessment
(4) identifying key actions to integrate IAS into National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plans.

Awareness raising about IPBES product at the national level

- Group 1 agreed that there is a need to raise awareness on IPBES assessments at the national level
- Identify the stakeholders to be targeted (Local communities, decision makers, CSOs, scientists etc.…)
- Identify the channels via which the sensitization will be done (community meetings, national workshops, radio, tv mobile cinema, social media, influencers etc.…)
- Select the methods and tools (Field school, exhibitions, policy brief, documentaries)

- Plan and organize the sensitization accordingly

Actions for controlling Invasive Alien species

- The key points to be considered for controlling IAS identified by group 2 are as follows:
- Developing National Strategy and Action plan
- Integrating IAS control strategy into national biodiversity policy/strategy
- Establishing scientific working groups/ task forces
- Planning, identify and prioritize objectives needing action
- Design your invasive species strategy, plan your work program, and put it into action
- Identify appropriate methodology (biological control, chemical control, and physical/mechanical control)
- Determine and mobilize resources (human and financial resources)
- Public awareness through appropriate communication strategies (effects, challenges, methodology)
- Integrate, coordinate and participate with all stakeholders (local communities, scientists/experts, policy
- makers, private sectors, NGOs, civil societies etc.)
- Implementation on the ground through mobilizing all the stakeholders
- Monitoring and evaluation the progress

Process of elaborating a national ecosystem assessment

- Mapping stakeholders involved in this thematic
- Organizing national workshop
- Overview of invasive alien species at the national level
- Identifying key issues
- Setting up action plan for the assessment
- Establishing the task force for the assessment of invasive alien species
- Resource mobilization
- Defining the methodology for the assessment
- Data collection and elaboration of the assessment report
- Organizing the validation meeting

Key actions to be undertaken by the IPBES NFP to integrate IAS into NBSAPs

- Approach the CBD focal point as he is responsible for developing NBSAP in the national context;
- Raise his awareness about the IAS report and let him know that such report;
  contains valuable findings that can be used through a solid argumentation;
- Make sure that he is in the national committee in charge of developing NBSAP
- Have a look at the key section of the NBSAP and decide where IAS can be included,
- Follow up to make sure that aspects of IAS included in the NBSAP is considered during implementation.

7. Biodiversity and Climate Change Dr. Nadia Sitas (CDKN)

The representative from CDKN exclaimed the availability of good practices here and there in fragmented circumstance, and underlined the need for sharing experiences and good practices to benefit optimally from our investments.
She explained the mission of her organization CDKN is to facilitate knowledge sharing and to promote focusing on climate change adaptation and mitigation technologies. She pointed out CDKN is headquartered in South Africa.
Nadia gave a speech on the topic "Why integrate biodiversity and climate change?". She explained future biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation, which **will result in a decrease in human well-being and resilience**. She also explained the impacts caused by the extreme vulnerability of Africa to climate change and the importance of conserving biodiversity in adaptation to climate change by halting, slowing, or reversing biodiversity loss. She described multiple co-benefits from conservation and climate action. She also explained how the work of IPBES helps to enhance the regional mainstreaming of biodiversity into the climate change framework in Africa. She described *Ecosystem-Based Adaptation* (EBA), a strategy designed **for adapting to climate change that harnesses nature-based solutions and ecosystem services**. She further explained the synergies of the *National Adaptation Plan* (NAP and NBSAPs) and *Nexus Assessment*.

8. Sub-Saharan Africa's national and international biodiversity conservation documents reviewed Prof. Nourou S. YOROU (University of Parakou)

Prof. Nourou S. YOROU reviewed national and international documents on biodiversity from Sub-Sahara Africa. He discussed CBD obligations by each contracting country in sub-Saharan Africa, further **evaluated the NBSAP and other BES reports**, and **summarized the results of the evaluations, especially on fungi in Sub-Saharan Africa**. In the same presentation, he discussed the functions and services of fungi, showed how these fungi were overlooked, and showed actions needed to include these biodiversity components in conservation attempts.
He discussed the obligations of each contracting party to the CBD regarding the conservation of biodiversity and described the reasons for the failure in the conservation of fungi, one of the five kingdoms of living organisms with good diversity in Sub-Saharan Africa, which at the same time **are very important for mankind and crucial for terrestrial life**. He also described *Ecosystem Based Adaptation*
He argued that fungi are disregarded in *the Global Biodiversity Outlooks* by pointing out that in the IPBES (2018) regional report, **there is no mention of their invaluable importance nor the need to conserve them**. He also indicated that their performance in sub-Saharan African countries is in the lower range. He further mentioned the similar neglect of other organisms such as **archaea, bacteria, chromistans, and protists** and concluded by indicating some initiatives of conservation of fungi in few sub-Saharan African countries and the urgency to conserve these biological resources.

9. End of Workshop Survey, Ms. Sarah /Dr. Isimemen

At the end of the workshop; first the participants were given a set of understanding and feedback questions using an online platform that aggregates individuals answers simultaneously using the *https://www.menti.com/* website. At the end the answer from the workshop participants reflected back

10.Workshop Closure Prof. Mekuria Argaw

Prof Mekuria, in his closing remarks, pointed out the following **key messages**:

- Appreciated the high turn out from the regional countries and the active engagement in the discussions and deliberations
- Stressed the need to harness the dialogue and knowledge exchange forum in the sub-region and the continent at large on issue of CABES
- Appreciated and thanked the support from the CABES project implementing partners, the fund provider of CABES, i.e. IKI-the German government
- Appreciated and thanked the unreserved support provided by the College of Natural and Computational Sciences in particular, and the Addis Ababa University at large for the excellent leadership and support provided to the CABES project and the contribution they have made to the success of the workshop
- Appealed to the East African sub-regional participants to encourage young scientists and professional aspirants to apply and get involved in the SPIBES Master's Program, to be launched in East Africa, at the Addis Ababa University in the coming year, 2024
- Thanked the German Ambassador, His Excellency, Mr. Stephan Auer, for his commitment to support future engagements in BES in the region
- Thanked the MoA and the Minister for gracing the workshop in the opening session
- Reiterated the commitment from HoAREC&N to continue supporting the sub-region in getting involved in IPBES work programs and uptake of scientific assessments for policy decision making

Prof. Tiliye Feyissa

Dean of the *College of Natural and Computational Science,* on his part, forwarded the following messages:

- Recognized CABES as a unique initiative that brought multiple stakeholders in one forum to take forward the issue of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
- Assured the participants and the CABES project leaders that the commitment of the College to support and successfully implement the SPIBES program
- Praised the national and international partners for the strong collaboration created through the CABES initiative and through the broader IPBES work

FINAL COMMUNIQUE

In the framework of the CABES project, the first sub-regional experts' workshop on "***Road to a Desired Future: the IPBES Nature Futures' Framework and Science-Policy-Practice Interface for Vision 2050***" took place in **Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from November 8th - 9th 2023**. In attendance at this workshop were eighty (80) experts from 27 countries. Amongst the participants were representatives from IPBES secretariat, IPBES national focal points, researchers, NGOs, as well as from the policy and the private sector. The workshop was conducted in a participatory way through several plenary sessions, breakout group sessions, interactive panels, and presentations. Through plenaries and different parallel sessions, the sub-regional workshop raised awareness on IPBES, the CABES project, promoted and strengthened the utilization of IPBES assessments/products, and increased the stakeholders' engagement in IPBES work programs to enable the timely achievement of IPBES goals.

1. RAISING AWARENESS AND PROMOTING STAKEHOLDERS' ENGAGEMENT IN IPBES WORK:

The participants recognized the relevance of the CABES initiative and its goals to support networking and engagement in IPBES through capacity development amongst multiple stakeholder groups in East Africa and to facilitate knowledge transfer about IPBESs. They also underlined the relevance of the CABES project to support networking and exchanges on best practices for better management and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services across the East Africa region. The participants noticed the challenges in engaging stakeholders in IPBES processes and provided useful ideas to better address the different stakeholder groups, particular women and youth groups, indigenous and local knowledge (ILK) holders, and the private sector that are underrepresented. Further, the participants highlighted the relevance of IPBES for East Africa, as a sub-region exceptionally rich in biodiversity, and in many ways' dependent on nature and its contributions to people.

2. FACILITATE EXCHANGE BETWEEN DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS:

The participants emphasized the strong need to bring together the different stakeholders to address the challenges related to biodiversity and ecosystem services in their respective countries. They appreciated the importance of such a workshop that facilitates networking activities through various interactive sessions and group discussions; where individual views were expressed, and common ideas developed. Although they are willing to engage in networking, they expressed several challenges beyond their control. Therefore, they requested possible support from CABES. The participants were happy about this opportunity and expressed interest in more such opportunities for exchanges across Eastern Africa.

3. STRENGTHEN THE SUB-REGIONAL AND NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES PLATFORMS:

The participants expressed the necessity of establishing and implementing national, sub-regional and regional platforms to support IPBES national focal points in their countries and to help better connect to the IPBES processes and facilitate the mainstreaming of IPBES relevant topics. Many countries expressed the need for establishing functional national biodiversity platforms that foster a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to assessments and their uptake, and policy development and implementation, including biodiversity-relevant multilateral environmental agreements such as CBD, UNFCCC, and UNCCD following the CABES project approach. Possible stakeholders, as well as their needs and modalities for engagement in the CABES-supported platforms, were also identified and documented. The strong need for the sustainability of these platforms was expressed. The participants appreciated CABES and other initiatives such as the National Ecosystem Assessment Initiatives and BES-Net ongoing efforts to establish and strengthen new and existing

national platforms, but at the same time indicated their strong interest in extending this number in the future. Challenges and opportunities regarding policy support and Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services conservation at different geographic scales were discussed. Of note, participants noted the limited relevance of regional and global assessments in informing national and sub-national policy processes. They called upon IPBES, donors and other like-minded actors to support countries to develop national ecosystem assessments which are more relevant to national policy, planning and decision-making processes.

4. Supporting uptake of IPBES products - the invasive alien species assessment and Nature Futures Framework (NFF):

The participants recognized the importance of IPBES products such as the assessment on the invasive alien species and the IPBES Nature Futures Framework (NFF). They stressed the increasing threats that invasive alien species pose to biodiversity, ecosystem services, sustainable development and human well-being. Therefore, participants expressed the need for a proper uptake of the key messages of these products, in particular the Invasive Alien Species Assessment national policies, as this is crucial for the countries of the East African region. They also highlighted the need for joint collaboration between their national focal points and relevant stakeholders (scientists and policy makers) in their countries to develop concrete policy implementation strategies. Participants also expressed the need to consider important organisms with high socioeconomic values, like Fungi, into the assessments. The integration of nature (biodiversity) and its contributions to people into national policy, planning and decision-making is critical to sustainable development.

5. Stakeholder demands for the CABES Capacity Development for early career scientists and SENIOR PROFESSIONALS were identified:

The participants are convinced about the necessity of the CABES Capacity Development Program for early career scientists and senior professionals as a means to further improve the knowledge base on topics relevant in the context of IPBES and Science-Policy-Practice Interfaces. They further appreciated the coming CABES master program for East and Central Africa - SPIBES. They were informed about the targeted countries and the number of students for the SPIBES programs across East and Central Africa. In addition, the participants provided ideas to make the SPIBES programs sustainable. Moreover, the participants emphasized the need for targeted courses for senior professionals, such as NFPs and other stakeholder groups. The participants welcomed the efforts promised by the CABES Capacity Development Program - CCDP for professionals to deliver numerous online courses based on participants' needs.

6. Acknowledgments by the Participants:

Participants express their sincere gratitude to the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Consumer Protection (BMUV) for its interest in the Eastern Africa sub-region and the support of CABES, and the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) for supporting this workshop and its objectives. Participants affirm their interests and commitments to CABES and its implementation and are grateful to the organizers of this first sub-regional workshop for providing the necessary facilities and a pleasant working atmosphere. The participants express their sincere thanks to the Government of Ethiopia and the Addis Ababa University-Horn of Africa Regional Environment Center and Network for hosting the workshop.

Addis Ababa, November 9th, 2023

The Participants

ANNEX 1: WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

"Road to a Desired Future: the IPBES Nature Futures' Framework and Science-Policy-Practice Interface for Vision 2050"

Jupiter International Hotel, Kazanchis, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

November 8-9th 2023

Day 1: 8 November			
Time (EAT)	Sessions/Activities	Presenter/Responsible	Moderator/Facilitator
8:00 – 9:00	Arrival and registration of Guests	HoAREC&N/Organizers	HoAREC&N/ Organizers
9:00 – 9:05	Workshop Program Introduction	Prof. Mekuria Argaw	Dr. Bikila Workneh
9:05 – 9:15	Welcome Address	Prof. Worash Getaneh AAU VP	
9:15 – 9:25		H.E. Mr. Stephan Auer, German Ambassador to Ethiopia (German Embassy Addis Ababa)	
9:25 – 9:35		Dr. Melesse Maryo; DDG of Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute (EBI)	
9:35 – 9:40		Dr. Isimemen Osemwegie (CABES ZEF Uni-Bonn)	
9:40 – 09:50	Opening Keynote speech	H.E. Prof. Eyasu Elias, State Minister, the Ministry of Agriculture	
09:50-10:05	Icebreaker	Dr. Jennifer Hauck	

10:05 – 10:25	African R Biodiversity, Ecosystem Systems and Policies: East Africa Perspective	Prof. Sebsebe Demissew	
10:25 – 10:45	Capacity development to support the implementation and uptake of the IPBES Products: CABES and its SPIBES Program	Dr. Isimemen Osemwegie	
10:45 – 11:15	Group photo/Coffee Break / Media Interviews		
11:15- 11:45	IPBES rolling work programs and products: IPBES 10 Plenary outcomes and next steps ahead	Dr. Sylvestre Da/IPBES secretary	Dr. Henning Sommer
11:45 – 12:30	Q&A, Discussion		
12:30 - 14:00	Lunch Break	Organizers	Organizers
14:00 - 14:10	Road to Vision 2050	Prof. Mekuria Argaw	Dr. Jennifer Hauck
14:10 – 14:20	The NFF for Plausible Futures: Alternative pathways to Vision 2050	Prof. Mekuria Argaw	
14:20 - 15.15	World Cafe with working groups on NFF	Dr. Jennifer Hauck	
15:15 – 15:45	Coffee Break	Organizers	Organizers
15:45 – 16:00	Feedback from working groups in plenary	Participants	Prof. Mylor Shutcha
16:00 – 16:10	Regional and sub-regional BES Platforms/Networks: Significance and role in enhancing IPBES products uptake	Dr. Sylvestre Da	
16:10-16:20	BES-Net and sub-regional platforms	Representative of BES-Net	
16:20 - 16:30	Q&A: Discussion		
16:30 - 17:15	Breakout groups: Coordinating effective participation in the CABES sub regional platforms	Dr. Sylvestre Da	
17:15 – 17:30	Feedback from working groups in plenary		
End of Day 1 Program			
18:30	Cocktail Reception at Jupiter Hotel	Organizers/ HoA-REC&N	

Day 2: 9 November			
9:00 – 9:15	Recap of Day 1 sessions	Dr. Jennifer Hauck	Dr. Sylvestre Da
9:15 - 9:25	Updates on National Platforms	Mr. Abisha Mapendembe	
9:25 - 10:00	Updates from National Platform Countries	IPBES NFPs	Mr. Abisha
10:00 - 10:15	Ethiopian National Biodiversity Platforms Experience	Dr. Feleke Woldeyes	
10:15 – 10:45	Panel Discussion on Experience from Non-IPBES countries (Djibouti, Mauritius, Rwanda, and South Sudan) on National Platforms & potential for National Platform establishment	Mr. Abisha Mapendembe/Dr. Paul	
10:45 - 11:15	Coffee Break	Organizers	Organizers
11:15 - 11:30	SPIBES MSc Programs of East Africa and Central Africa	Dr. Tigist Wondimu and Dr. Paul Kazaba	Dr. Paul Kazaba
11:30 - 11:40	CABES Capacity Development Program (CCDP) - for Professionals	Dr. Jennifer Hauck	
11:40 -12:10	Parallel breakout group sessions: National Platforms; SPIBES and CCDP	Dr. Jennifer Hauck	
12:10 - 12:30	Feedback from groups in plenary	Dr. Jennifer Hauck	
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch Break	Organizers	Organizers
14:00 – 14:20	Invasive Alien Species and threats to Biodiversity: knowledge, perspectives and solutions in the East African sub-region	Ms. Betty Rono, IPBES Fellow	Prof. N'golo KONÉ
14:20 - 14:40	Strategies for the uptake of IPBES assessments in national policy making: Outcome from the face-to-face training	Participants of the face-to-face training	
14:40 – 15:00	Inter-linkages between Biodiversity and Climate Change	Dr. Nadia Sitas (CDKN)	
15:00 - 15:10	Sub-Saharan Africa's national and international biodiversity conservation documents	Prof. Nourou S. YOROU (University of Parakou)	

	reviewed		
15:10 – 15:20	Q&A: Discussion		
15:20 – 15:30	End of Workshop Survey	Ms. Sara/Dr. Isimemen	
15:30 – 16:00	Communique & Closure	Prof. Mekuria ARGAW/ Prof. Tiliye, Dean of College of Natural Science	
16:00	End of Program	Closure	

ANNEX 2: PARTICIPANTS OF THE WORKSHOP

No	Full name	Country	Organization
1	Dr. Abdourahman Houssein Djama	Djibouti	U Djibouti
2	Dr. Adane Kebede	Ethiopia	HoAREC&N
3	Dr. Amarys S. PREUSS	German	IPBES
4	Dr. Augustine Bongo	South Sudan	UJ
5	Dr. Besha Abaisa	Ethiopia	ECFF
6	Ms. Betty Jpchirchir Rono	Kenya	EU
7	Dr. BIkila Workneh	Ethiopia	AAU/ DPBBM
8	Dr. Demeke Dakito	Ethiopia	EBI/BESNet
9	Dr. El Khitma Elawad Mohammed	Sudan	HCENR
10	Dr. Ermias Lulelkal	Ethiopia	AAU
11	Dr. Fassil Gebeyehu	Ethiopia	African Biodiversity Network
12	Dr. Feleke Woldeyes	Ethiopia	EBI
13	Dr. Isimemen Osemwegie	Germany	ZEF/CABES
14	Dr. Jean Bruno Mikissa	Gabon	NSWF
15	Dr. Jennifer Hauck	Germany	Coknow/CABES
16	Dr. Kebu Balemie	Ethiopia	EBI /ILK
17	Dr. KOUADIO Kouakou	Côte d'Ivoire	UFHB/CABES
18	Dr. Malik Doka Morjan	South Sudan	UJ
19	Dr. Margaret Oduk	Ethiopia	UNEP
20	Dr. Melese Maryo	Ethiopia	EBI/ DG
21	Dr. Nadia Sitas	South Africa	CDKN
22	Dr. Paul Kaseya Kazaba	DRC	UL/CABES
23	Dr. Peter Endome Akwee	Kenya	TUC
24	Dr. Samuel Kifle	Ethiopia	AAU
25	Dr. Sié Sylvestre Da	Burkina Faso	WASCAL/CABES
26	Dr. Tigist Wondimu	Ethiopia	AAU/ DPBBM
27	Dr. Yro Hyacinthe Tie	Côte d'Ivoire	MHESD
28	Mr. Abdérémane Hachime	Comoros	MEAFE
29	Mr. Abdirashid Artan Abdirahman	Somalia	MECC
30	Prof. Mekuria Argaw	Horn of Africa	HoA-REC&N/CABES
31	Prof. Worash Getaneh	Ethiopia	AAU
32	Mr. Stephan Auer	Ethiopia	GEE
33	Prof. Eyasu Elias	Ethiopia	MAE
34	Prof. Sebsebe Demissew	Ethiopia	AAU
35	Prof. Mylor Shutcha	DRC	UL/CABES

36	Mr. Abisha Mapendembe	United Kingdom	UNEP-WCMC/CABES
37	Prof. Nourou S. YOROU	Benin	UP
38	Ms. Sarah VERLEYSDONK	Germany	ZEF/CABES
39	Prof. Tiliye	Ethiopia	AAU
40	Dr. Henning Sommer	Germany	ZEF/CABES
42	Prof. N'golo KONÉ	Côte d'Ivoire	UFHB/CABES

ANNEX 3: SPEECHES

1. Welcoming address by Dr. Mellese Mariyo, Director General, Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute

Your Excellency Prof. Eyasu Elias, State Minister, Ministry of Agriculture of the FDRE,
Your Excellency Mr. Stephan Auer, German Ambassador to Ethiopia,
Prof. Mekuria Argaw, Executive Director, Horn of Africa Regional Environment Centre and Network,
Your Excellency Professor Worash Getaneh, Vice President of Addis Ababa University,
Your Excellency Amaryas Preuss, Representative of IPBES
Honorable delegates from West, Central and East African countries, distinguished guests and all protocols,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honored to deliver this remark and I would like to welcome you all to the CABES East Africa Sub regional workshop organized under the theme "Road to a desired Future: The IPBES Nature Future framework and Science- Policial Interface for vision 2050". As an individual heading a national institution working towards the conservation and sustainable utilization of the country's biological resources, I regard the organization of this workshop and your participation in the event as a clear demonstration of a firm commitment by partners to cooperatively shape the future of biodiversity and nature's contribution to the peoples of Africa, and the globe at large.

As expressively described by the UN Secretary General in his COP 15 opening speech last December, "Biodiversity is the source and sustainer of the air we breathe, the food we eat, the energy we use, the jobs and economic activities we count on, the species that enrich human life, and the landscapes and waterscapes we call home''. It is a foundation to the achievement of 80% of the SDGs, providing essential ecosystem services (NCP), whose loss jeopardizes their achievements. Biodiversity and nature's contributions to people are essential for a good quality of life on earth.

Nonetheless, biodiversity is in a rapid decline all around the globe. With many species of plants and animals at risk of extermination, it is more urgent than ever to tackle the drivers of biodiversity loss and engage in transformative change. This has become more obvious following the recognition of the triple planetary crisis - biodiversity loss, climate change and pollution that the world faces as one of the significant threats to human well-being and the capacity of ecosystems to sustain economic growth.

As disclosed during the 7th session of the IPBES plenary, following the completion of the 11' Global Assessment, one million of the world's estimated 8 million species of plants and animals are threatened with extinction; 75% of the Earth's land surface has been significantly altered by human actions, including 85% of wetland areas. The health of the ecosystems on which we and all other species depend on is degrading today at an unprecedented rate. The findings of the assessment suggested a more than ever credible risk of mass extinction of species in the next few decades, unless urgent measures are not taken globally and within states. By the same token, GB05 also indicated the need for greater efforts to address the direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss, including changes in land and sea use, climate change, direct exploitation, pollution, displacement and migration, unsustainable production & consumption patterns, human population dynamics, international trade & technological innovations, absence, or weak policy, institutions and governance system.

Furthermore, the invasive alien species assessment report which was adopted at IPBES 10 in September showed that IAS cause irreversible changes to biodiversity and ecosystems, resulting in 60% of global species extinction; about 423 billion $ global annual cost of biological invasion; People and nature are seriously threatened by IAS in all regions of the world, and the impacts are manifested in the form of local and global species extinctions, food and water security, human health problems, and inability to achieve good quality of life in general. If we take the Ethiopian situation for instance, the invader weed *Prosopis juliflora* has already taken millions of hectares of land in the Ethiopian Rift valley affecting rangelands, agricultural lands and protected areas, particularly national parks, besides damaging indigenous plant and animal species. Similarly, water hyacinth is challenging fresh water bodies and aquatic life of the Country. Generally, it is anticipated that the accelerated loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services will have significant consequences on economies and society in general.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The 2023 Global Risk Assessment indicates that 60% of the top 10 risks are related to biodiversity loss and ecosystems degradation. The first top four are directly linked to problems of environment, including failure to mitigate climate change, failure of climate-change adaptation, Natural disasters and extreme weather events, and Biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse. The aforementioned challenges on biodiversity and ecosystem weaken livelihoods, food security, health and quality of life worldwide and pose economic and financial risks. The poorest and vulnerable populations are increasingly at risk of facing detrimental disasters. As evidence shows, fragmented ecosystems have become vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters, and in consequence have lost productivity of vital ecosystem services required to ensure food, water, energy, and health security, which are crucial for human wellbeing. This trend is projected as regressive with a significant threat to economic growth.

Fortunately, new global agendas have been defined for: conservation, sustainable extractions from ecosystems and consumption patterns, reductions of GHGs, and stronger governance with increased social inclusion of poor communities so as to bring the transformational change required to set the world on a pathway to sustainability and attaining the SDGs. With the aim to reverse the declining trend of biodiversity and promote more sustainable and resilient economies, COP 15 has adopted the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (the KMGBF), identifying the underlying threats, means and tools. The GBF set the global commitments to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity by 2030, to ensure that biodiversity is sustainably used and managed, and to ensure nature's contributions to people is valued, maintained and enhanced, to support a sustainable development for the benefit of future generations.

To attain the 2050 long term vision of living in harmony with nature, and ambitiously bringing about the change away from business as usual, the new deal under the GBF historically set ambitious targets on a wide range of key issues. Target 2 that aims at conserving 30% of the global land and seascapes by 2030, and Target 3 that aims at restoring 30% of degraded landscapes by the end of the planned period arc of major importance in this regard. Target 6 of the GBF that aims at mitigating the impact of Invasive Alien Species on Biodiversity an Ecosystem Services; and the outcomes of IPBES 10 on IAS will constitute a vita input in addressing this Target.

In tripling biodiversity financing the GBF sets a target to mobilize $200 billion as an annual biodiversity financial flow, from all sources over a period of 8 years (by 2030). The establishment of two new biodiversity funds set a pathway for the mobilization of additional resources for biodiversity, and included a dedicated Global Biodiversity Fund to be operationalized through a special window under the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and a Global Multilateral Fund within the Global Biodiversity Fund for the equitable sharing of benefits from the utilization of Digital Sequenced Information (DSO. To ensure inclusiveness and equity in this pathway, the GBF emphasizes the protection and respect of the rights of Indigenous People and Local Communities (IPLCs), women, and youth, and also acknowledges the key role the private sector that can play in attaining the conservation and climate targets by 2030.Efforts to be made at Regional, Sub regional, National and Local Levels to reduce pressures on Biodiversity. To curb the challenges, governments have to put in place a range of policy, institutional and legislative frameworks to address the major causes of ecosystem degradation and biodiversity loss.

The last decades' concern of the global community, based on wide range of scientific findings at multiple scales, pertained to the failure to achieve defined global goals on biodiversity and climate action. These provided alerts on the unprecedented loss in biodiversity, with threats to ecosystem functioning and resilience from human pressure and climate shocks. Projections on a business-as-usual scenario depict the negative impacts, a collapse of ecosystem vitality, and unlikely to meet the needs of the people and the economy. The experience and understanding of this brought into global decision-making processes on interlinkages between biodiversity loss, climate change and development; and the urgency for action led to the emergence of a new wave of ambitious global commitments that emphasize synergy and coordination at multiple scales as critical methods in undertaking this crisis situation in the coming decade. In line with this, parties, governments and other organizations need to:

- Promote science, technology, innovation and other knowledge systems in the KM-GBF implementation;
- Support the development of biodiversity-related technologies and innovations at the local, national, sub-regional and regional levels; and,
- Identify and prioritize capacity building and development needs, in partnership with local communities, including institutional capacity at national levels.

Additionally, in our future plan with the aim to halt biodiversity loss by 2030, and ensuring living in harmony with nature by 2050, countries have to work win harmony with all relevant stakeholders to implementing=g the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. It is, therefore, essential to:

- Fine-tune national diagnostic reports informed by scientific assessment;
- Verify biodiversity threat and drivers of loss at selected eco-regions that already highlighted via national assessment, and further identify economic activities responsible for biodiversity decline;
- Map out private sector actors and other stakeholders who engage in economic activities that drive pressure on biodiversity and engage them on biodiversity conservation;
- Identify scenarios and options for stakeholders' dialogue at landscape and national levels to set up framework of voluntary commitment

- Strengthen further, the role of local communities and stakeholder engagement towards ensuring effective biodiversity conservation.
- Strengthen the new NBSAPs, including their adoption as whole-of-government policy instruments.

Issues specified above clearly indicate the need for making concerted efforts at regional, sub-regional, national and local levels so as to reduce pressures on biodiversity. To curb the mounting challenges, governments have to put in place a range of pol icy, institutional and legislative frameworks to address the major causes of ecosystem degradation and biodiversity loss. Events like this workshop, therefore, are of crucial importance in bringing relevant actors together so as to get updates on the scale of the biodiversity loss related challenge, deliberate on possible modalities of actions, and propose prospective interventions.

I am, therefore, thankful to the Hom of Africa Regional Environment Centre and Network for organizing the workshop, which provides opportunity to share views on the current status of the challenges the African Biodiversity in particular, and the globe at large are confronted with, and also join hands and contribute our share towards protecting the environment, conserving biodiversity, and ensuring the perpetuation of life on earth.

Thank you for your attention!

2. Welcome Statement by Prof. **Worash** Getaneh, Vice president, Addis Ababa University

Excellency, Prof. Eyasu Elias, State Minister, Ministry of Agriculture

Excellency, Mr. Stephan Auer, German Ambassador to Ethiopia

Dr. Mellese Maryo, Director General, Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute

Prof. Mekuria Argaw, Executive Director of HoAREC/N

Ms. Amarys Presuss, IPBES representative

Distinguished guests, workshop participants, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning and a very warm greeting to all of you.

It gives me a great pleasure to welcome you all to this grand gathering of the first CABES East Africa Sub-Regional Workshop on "Road to a Desired Future: the IPBES Nature Futures' Framework and Science-Policy-Practice Interface for Vision 2050".

First and most, I am very happy to see you all this morning, and please allow me also to say Welcome to your continental Capital, Addis Ababa, and to the land of origin, Ethiopia.

Addis Ababa is the Diplomatic Capital of Africa and the third diplomatic center in the world, situated in an altitude of 2000 to 3200 meters above sea level with all-year-round pleasant climate. Hence, it enjoys high level of ecological, social, climatic, cultural, diplomatic diversity, and it has a lot to offer to its visitors, adventurers, diplomats, researchers, and of 1 course to experts who would like to explore, even while having a workshop like this one, Welcome to your Capital and enjoy the beautiful City of Addis. Ethiopia is a land of many forms of diversities and brands itself as the land of Origins. It is the birth place of the species, Homo sapiens, and origin of several of the cultivated crops such as Coffee, Teff, Enset, and a Center of diversity for major food crops such as Wheat, Barley, and Sorghum. Among the many plant species, about 12 % are endemic to Ethiopia. Not only Ethiopia, the entire Horn of Africa region is one of the few Biodiversity Hotspots on the continent with high level of endemism in its flora and fauna. However, the global biodiversity resources and ecosystems are alarmingly degraded and some species are pushed to the brink of extinction.

As a mega diversity country, we understand that, Ethiopia has huge responsibility to protect and conserve its biodiversity resources and ecosystems not only to the benefit and survival of its population but also to the wellbeing of humanity at large. Biodiversity resources are human treasures, and the responsibility of conservation is collective, despite differing degree of challenges faced by states.

Ethiopia is one of the founding members of the IPBES global initiative and advances its good cause. The IPBES provides a valuable platform for the integration of scientific findings into policies and decision-making processes, ensuring the effective conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. As academic institutions, we have a unique opportunity to contribute to this Endeavor by creating an enabling environment for enhancing the Science-Policy- Practice Interface. At this juncture, I am proud to say that Staff members of Addis Ababa University in the field of biodiversity and associated disciplines have played a crucial role during the establishment of IPBES and have been serving at various capacities throughout its work programs, and some are still serving as members of the Bureau, members of task forces and authors of on-going assessments of the IPBES. I learned that; the CASES capacity building project is a result of this international engagement.

As the President of the Addis Ababa University, I am honored to host this important event, which aims to strengthen the interconnection between science-policy and promote the utilization of IPBES products and its rolling work program up to 2030. As an academic institution, it is vital to recognize and embrace the significance of the IPBES framework and its contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) Goals at national and global levels. In this regard, Addis Ababa University is also contributing to the capacity development program of the IPBES by leading the CASES project implementation in the East African sub-region. The Horn of Africa Regional Environment Center at our University, in collaboration with the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, will strengthen and ensure the successful implementation of the National Biodiversity Platform. Most Importantly, as it is our primary mission, I would like to reaffirm our commitment to the successful delivery of the SPIBES Masters' Program, which will be hosted and run by the Department of Plant Biology and Biodiversity Management at the College of Natural and Computational Sciences. Our university will further explore collaborative partnerships in research and training with our African and international stakeholders, not only in the field of biodiversity but also in various scientific initiatives of regional and global significance.

Before I conclude, I would like to express my appreciation and thanks to the entire CASES team for organizing this grand workshop, which has brought key stakeholders, experts and scientists from the West, East and Central Africa and Europe to deliberate on this urgent and global concern of our time. I urge all participants to actively engage in discussions, share their experiences, and develop concrete action plans to strengthen the Science-Policy- Practice Interface in our respective countries and institutions. Together, through our collective efforts, we can significantly contribute to the achievement of the SDGs and the post-2020 GBF Goals. Let us seize this opportunity to build partnerships, foster collaboration, and make a lasting impact on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Finally, on behalf of the beneficiaries, I would like to commend the Government of Germany for the continued commitment and financially supporting grand initiatives like the CASES, creating opportunities for south-south cooperation and global engagements.

Thank you and I wish you all a fruitful and successful workshop.

Keynote speech by H.E. Prof. Eyasu Elias, State Minister, Ministry of Agriculture

Your Excellency, Prof. Worash Getaneh, Vice President of Addis Ababa University,

Your Excellency, Mr. Stephan Auer, German Ambassador to Ethiopia

Dr. Mellese Maryo, Director General, Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute

Ms. Amarys Presuss, representative of IPBES

Dr. Isimemen, representative of CABES

My colleagues at Addis Ababa University

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning and welcome to Ethiopia and the beautiful city of Adis Ababa, and capital of Africa.

It is an honor to stand before you today that marks CASES first sub-regional workshop hosted by the Horn of Africa Regional Environment Center and Network ((HoREC/N) based at Addis Ababa University. The theme of the workshop, “The Road to a Desired Future: the IPBES Nature Futures Framework and Science-Policy-Practice Interface for Vision 2050” is well crafted and timely, as we are grappling with ecosystem degradation caused agricultural expansions and uncontrolled extraction of natural resources that exacerbated by climate change-induced weather extreme events such as flood and recurrent drought that hard hit much the eastern Africa but more severely the Horn of Africa.

The Horn of Africa, and indeed, the eastern Africa sub-region is a region of immense natural beauty, cultural diversity, and of global ecological significance. However, it is also a region that faces significant challenges when it comes to loss of biodiversity resources and ecosystem services. Our ecosystems are under threat from a variety of factors, including habitat destruction, over-exploitation of resources, climate change, and invasive species. Recent decades have witnessed climate-induced loss of biodiversity resources as rising temperatures, drought and floods are causing increasing shifts in ecosystems resulting in irreparable damage to biodiversity. This ranges from the coral bleaching in our oceans to the loss of suitable habitats for vulnerable species, the effects of climate change are far-reaching and alarming.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Addressing the environmental challenges requires strengthening cross-border collaboration, working together as a region to strengthen policies, share best practices, and enhance the efficacy of biodiversity conservation efforts. Here comes the vital role of global stakeholder platforms such as the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) that works with regional blocks to address specific ecosystem challenges. IPBES provides policymakers with scientific information and guidance to make informed decisions on environmental conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity resource.

In the face of daunting challenges, the need for capacity development for biodiversity and ecosystem service experts cannot be overemphasized. In this connection, we commend the efforts being made by CABES (Capacity Development for Biodiversity' and Ecosystem Service) network that strives to enhance technical and scientific expertise in the field of biodiversity research and conservation. The Ethiopian government commends the work that HoREC networks are doing in capacity building training, research and data generation that forms the bases for evidence-based conservation efforts.

As HoREC network countries I think we have made some significant progress in our mission to protect and sustainably manage the biodiversity and ecosystem services over the past few decades. We have worked diligently to engage governments, scientists, indigenous communities, NGOs, and other stakeholders in this critical effort.

In this connection, the work that the people and Government of Ethiopia are doing in restoring degraded ecosystems can provide classical example of national efforts of biodiversity conservation. Ethiopia has formulated the Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) Strategy that strives to achieve economic growth while pursuing climate neutral development pathways. More recently. Prime Minister Abi Ahmed initiated which is polarly known in Ethiopia as the Green legacy initiative (GLI) that enabled planting 25 billion seedlings in a span of four years (2020192022). The year 2023 has marked the kick-start of the second phase of GLI that aims to plant another 25 billion forest, fodder and fruit seedlings of which we have already planted 7.5 billion seedlings just this past rainy season. Tens of thousands of hectares of degraded forest ecosystems have now been restored through afforestation, terracing and conservation works by mobilizing our communities and domestic resources.

The Ethiopian experiences shows that although the environmental changes we are facing are immense, they, however, are not insurmountable. We have the knowledge, the tools, and the collective willpower to protect our precious biodiversity and ecosystems for generations to come. But it takes political commitment at higher level and community mobilization at grassroots level. Documenting and scaling up such experiences would be useful for wider application in the HoREC countries with some level of verification and validation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The journey you are embark upon today is part of a larger mission to better utilize IPBES assessments and integrate their findings into your national policies. By doing so, you can strengthen your abilities to conserve and sustainably utilize biodiversity and ecosystem services the very essence of nature's contributions to humanity. Let us make conscious choices, advocate for change, and be stewards of the natural world around us.

I, therefore, encourage you all to actively engage, share your experiences, and harness the power of collaboration to shape a better future for biodiversity and ecosystem services in Africa.

Finally, I would like to express my heart-felt gratitude to the workshop organizers, specially, HoREC who is the host of this workshop, and the development partners who have financed partners, and all those involved in making this workshop possible.

Wishing you all a fruitful deliberation, I declare that the workshop is officially open!

I thank you!!