

**Post-Conference Report**  
**ACES 2014 Tuesday Evening Town Hall**  
**December 9, 2014 | 5:45pm-6:50pm**

**Title: *The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES): Opportunities for Science to Inform International Policy on Biodiversity Change***

## **Goals**

The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) was established in 2012 as an independent intergovernmental body dedicated to assessing the state of the planet's biodiversity, its ecosystems, and the essential services they provide to society. The goals of this town hall were to summarize IPBES history, structure, and governance; provide information about ongoing assessments; and summarize opportunities to participate in IPBES as expert panel members, contributors to assessments, and reviewers.

## **Presentations**

*Clifford Duke*, Ecological Society of America, IPBES Structure, Governance, and Opportunities to Contribute

*Charles Perrings*, Arizona State University, IPBES Origins and History

*Frank Hawkins*, International Union for the Conservation of Nature, IPBES in Context of Related International Efforts

*James Boyd*, Resources for the Future, IPBES in Context of Related U.S. Efforts

## **Discussion**

IPBES has four functions: 1) identify and prioritize key scientific information needed for policymakers and catalyze efforts to generate new knowledge by engaging relevant scientific, policy and funding organizations; 2) perform regular and timely assessments of knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services and their interlinkages; 3) support policy formulation and implementation by identifying policy-relevant tools and methodologies; and 4) prioritize key capacity-building needs to improve the science-policy interface and catalyze related financing. As with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) efforts on climate change, IPBES will provide scientists, economists, and other experts important opportunities to support science-based environmental decision-making at global to local scales.

Attendees discussed how IPBES links to past projects such as the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) and to ongoing ones like the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Speakers explored differences and similarities among these projects. For example, in contrast to the MEA, IPBES is expected to be an ongoing effort, with a variety of reports of varying scope. Like the IPCC, IPBES will engage a broad array of contributors from many countries, but unlike the IPCC, IPBES has an explicit charge to develop policy recommendations.

## Summary

The goal of this town hall was to raise the profile of IPBES among ACES attendees and to stimulate interest in participation in the Platform's work. IPBES and ACES share a fundamental interest in the development and use of ecosystem services analysis in environmental decision-making. The Ecological Society of America is particularly focused on engaging the U.S. scientific community in IPBES; for more detail, see [esa.org/ipbes](http://esa.org/ipbes).

## Organizers

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## Organizers' Qualifications

Dr. Duke directs the Office of Science Programs at the Ecological Society of America (ESA) and is the Principal Investigator of the National Science Foundation-sponsored project "U.S. Scientific Community Engagement in the Intergovernmental Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services," which seeks to raise the profile of IPBES in the U.S. scientific community. Dr. Duke has organized numerous symposia and panel discussions at ESA and other professional society meetings, and independent workshops on a wide variety of topics. See [http://www.esa.org/esa/?page\\_id=116](http://www.esa.org/esa/?page_id=116) for examples.

Dr. Perrings is Professor of Environmental Economics at Arizona State University, where he directs (with Ann Kinzig) the ecoSERVICES Group within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The Group studies the causes and consequences of change in ecosystem services. As Vice Chair of DIVERSITAS he was on the Executive Committee of IMOSEB, the precursor to IPBES, and later represented ICSU in the intergovernmental process to establish IPBES. He was also lead author of the 2011 paper (with A. Duraipah, A. Larigauderie, A., and H. Mooney), "The Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Science-Policy Interface," published in *Science*, 331:1139 -1140, which explores the opportunities and challenges presented by IPBES.