



Stakeholder Forum  
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*'World in Progress', a giant painting on the lawn of UNEP HQ in Nairobi to mark UNEA 5.2. Source: Saype.<sup>206</sup>*

## 8. Science Bodies for the Triple Planetary Crisis

Science plays a vital role in guiding global action on climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. To strengthen the link between scientific knowledge and policy decisions, several intergovernmental science-policy bodies have been established – each focusing on one of the three dimensions of the triple planetary crisis.



## Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

Established in 1988 by the [World Meteorological Organisation](#)<sup>207</sup> (WMO) and the [United Nations Environment Programme](#)<sup>208</sup> (UNEP), the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#)<sup>209</sup> (IPCC) provides governments at all levels with reliable scientific information to support the development of effective climate policies. Its reports serve as a cornerstone for international climate negotiations.

The IPCC is composed of [195 member governments](#)<sup>210</sup>, all of which are members of the UN or WMO or have a direct membership with the WMO. Thousands of scientists and experts from around the world contribute voluntarily to its work, assessing and synthesising the vast body of climate research published each year. These assessments offer comprehensive insights into the drivers of climate change, its current and future impacts, and strategies for mitigation and adaptation.

Each report undergoes a rigorous, open, and transparent review process by both experts and governments to ensure balance, accuracy, and representation of diverse perspectives. While the IPCC does not conduct original research, it plays a crucial role in identifying the strength of scientific consensus and highlighting areas where further study is needed.

The IPCC is divided into three working groups and a task force:

- *Working Group 1* - The physical science basis of climate change
- *Working Group 2* - Climate change impacts
- *Working Group 3* - Mitigation of climate action

The main objective of the task force is to develop and refine a methodology for [National Greenhouse Gas Inventories](#)<sup>211</sup>. While this is the primary task force of the IPCC, other task forces may be developed based on a particular topic or question. An example of this is the 2018 task force developed to improve gender balance and address gender-related issues within the IPCC. The work developed from the 2018 task force was fundamental to adopting IPCC's [Gender Policy and Implementation Plan](#).<sup>212</sup> Among the key IPCC reports is the so-called comprehensive Assessment Reports, which is about the state of scientific, technical and socio-economic knowledge on climate change, its impacts and future risks, and options for reducing the rate at which climate change is taking place. The 6th Assessment Report was published in 2023, and the next one is expected to be published in 2029.

## Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

The [Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services](#)<sup>213</sup> (IPBES) is an independent intergovernmental body established by UN Member States



Stakeholder Forum  
for a sustainable future

to strengthen the science-policy communication for biodiversity and ecosystem services for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long-term human well-being, and sustainable development. It was established on 21 April 2012 in Panama City, Panama, by 94 governments. Though it is not a United Nations body, its work ties closely to UN processes and frameworks, particularly the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), which provides secretariat support. IPBES brings together experts from around the world to assess the state of biodiversity, ecosystems, and the benefits they provide to people. Its assessments inform policymakers, guide international negotiations, and identify options for actions at local, national, and global levels to halt biodiversity loss and promote the sustainable use of natural resources.

IPBES is made up of a governing body known as a plenary, which meets once per year. There are currently 150 member States of IPBES, though a large number of NGOs, organisations, conventions, and Major Groups participate in the formal IPBES process as observers, with several thousand stakeholders, ranging from scientific experts to representatives of academic research institutions, local communities and the private sector, all contributing to and benefitting from their work.

## Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste, and Pollution

Recognising the need for a comparable mechanism addressing chemicals, waste, and pollution, the international community worked to establish the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste, and Pollution (ISP-CWP). This panel aims to strengthen the global science-policy interface in this area, providing authoritative assessments and guidance to reduce pollution and promote sound chemical and waste management across all sectors.

The ISP-CWP was established on 20 June 2025 under the mandate of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) under resolution 5/8 adopted in March 2022. This panel addresses one of the most critical but under-supported pillars of the global environmental agenda - pollution. ISP-CWP aims to uplift this critical environmental topic through assessing existing knowledge, identifying policy options, and building on what is effective, inclusive, and grounded in scientific evidence.

Governments, scientists, and stakeholders from all regions agreed to the Panel's foundational document through an [intergovernmental process](#)<sup>214</sup> from 2022 to 2025. The Secretariat of the Panel is hosted by UNEP. The first plenary session ([ISP-CWP P1](#))<sup>215</sup> will be held from 2 February 2026 to 6 February 2026 at the [Geneva International Conference Centre](#)<sup>216</sup> (CICG).

Together, these science-policy bodies form a critical foundation for understanding and responding to the Triple Planetary Crisis, each contributing authoritative assessments that



Stakeholder Forum  
for a sustainable future

guide global, regional, and national action. While the IPCC, IPBES, and the ISP-CWP provide specialised assessments on climate change, biodiversity, and pollution, the broader UN system also produces major scientific syntheses that complement this work. UNEP regularly publishes the Global Environment Outlook (GEO), an integrated assessment of the state of the global environment, emerging trends, and policy pathways. Likewise, the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) commissions the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR), which provides science-based insights and recommendations for implementing the 2030 Agenda. Together, these assessments help ensure that policymakers have access to credible, interdisciplinary, and actionable science to inform decisions addressing the interlinked dimensions of the Triple Planetary Crisis.



# References

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