19 June 2015

Excellency,

I have the honour to invite your Government to participate in the fourth session of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Plenary, to be hosted by the Government of Malaysia from 22 to 28 February 2016, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Please be advised that it will be possible to hold regional and other consultations at the venue prior to the meetings on Saturday, 20 February and Sunday, 21 February 2016.

According to Rule 3 of the Rules of procedure for the Plenary of the Platform, the venue and dates of each session are to be decided by the Plenary at the preceding session. If this is not possible, it should be decided by the Bureau. No decision on venue and date having been made at the last Plenary, the Bureau, noting that no offer had been received by the IPBES secretariat, decided at its 5th meeting in April 2015 that the fourth session of the Platform’s Plenary would be held from 22 to 28 February 2016 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Please find attached the provisional agenda for the fourth session of the Plenary. The fourth session will review progress made on the adopted IPBES work programme for 2014 – 2018, including the related budget and institutional arrangements for its implementation. It will, in particular, be invited to consider the two first assessment full reports of IPBES (pollination and pollinators associated with food production; and scenarios analysis and modelling of biodiversity and ecosystem services) for adoption, and their respective summary for policymakers, for approval. In light of this heavy agenda, the Bureau has recommended to convene a 7-day session. An information note concerning practical arrangements, along with the other official documents of the meeting, will be distributed under separate cover and published on the website www.ipbes.net once available.

For the purpose of making preparatory arrangements for the session, please fill in the online registration form (http://ipbes.net/registrationformipbes4) as soon as possible, and no later than 15 September 2015. In addition, in line with the IPBES Rules of Procedure, and as with previous meetings, each member Government is required to submit official credentials of its representative, together with the names of alternate representatives and advisers, to the secretariat. The credentials must be issued either by the Head of State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, consistent with each country’s policy and law. Each Government is encouraged to send a copy of the credentials to the secretariat in advance of the session, preferably by e-mail (secretariat@ipbes.net), and the original should be submitted as soon as possible, but no later than 24 hours after the opening of the session.
Only those Governments that have submitted credentials issued by the above authorities may participate fully in the session.

For developing countries, the IPBES secretariat will, upon request, be able to provide financial support to cover travel expenses corresponding to the most economical and direct flights to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for one representative from each country, including for the regional consultations on 20 or 21 February 2016. Representatives requiring financial assistance are requested to notify the secretariat by e-mail (secretariat@ipbes.net) by 15 September 2015 at the latest.

Lastly, if not already submitted, all members are requested to submit the name and contact details of their National Focal Point (NFP) to the IPBES Secretariat (secretariat@ipbes.net).

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Anne Larigauderie
Executive Secretary

Enc.: 1) Provisional agenda for the fourth session of the Plenary of IPBES

To: Ministers for Environment of all States Members of the United Nations or members of specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency
cc: Permanent representatives to UNEP
    Permanent missions to the United Nations in New York, Geneva and Vienna
    Participants at the first, second and third session of the Platform’s plenary (IPBES-1, IPBES-2 and IPBES 3)
    IPBES National Focal Points.