

Contact Group 1: Operating Principles

11/12/23 6:00pm-7:30pm

Operating principles of the Panel from UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF/10

1. In carrying out its work, the science-policy Panel shall be guided by the following operating principles:
 - (a) Scientific independence and ensuring credibility, relevance and legitimacy including through peer review of its work, transparency in its decision-making processes, and addressing potential conflicts of interest;
 - (b) Producing deliverables that are credible and scientifically robust;
 - (c) Interdisciplinarity, ensuring contributions from experts with a broad range of disciplinary and sectoral expertise;
 - (d) Inclusivity of participation and forms of knowledge shared, including by indigenous peoples, indigenous and traditional knowledge, and local knowledge;
 - (e) Having geographical, regional and gender balance;
 - (f) Delivering outputs that are policy relevant without being policy prescriptive, avoiding overlap and duplication of work, and promoting coordination and cooperation;
 - (g) Flexibility, so as to be responsive to member Governments' needs, in particular needs of developing countries, while still preserving the scientific and policy bases upon which it operates;
 - (h) Incorporating the precautionary approach, as stated in Principle 15 of the 1992 Rio Declaration;
 - (i) Incorporating a human rights-based approach, including by recognizing the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment, the right to science, the importance of informed participation, and the need to give special attention to those populations most vulnerable to adverse impacts from chemicals, waste and pollution;
 - (j) Addressing all forms of pollution, including pollution related to chemicals and waste and pollution released into the air, water (including oceans) and soil.

Additional Elements Proposed by Contact Group 1 on Monday 11 December

- a. gender equality/ gender mainstreaming
- b. cost effectiveness
- c. coordination and cooperation
- d. balanced between developed and developing countries
- e. ethical considerations in relation with conduct of research
- f. intergenerational equity
- g. capacity building
- h. knowledge within and among regions
- i. prevention
- j. information on chemicals/materials
- k. workers, including informal workers, cooperative workers
- l. good governance
- m. transparency in work and decision-making

- n. need for prioritization
- o. complementarity
- p. healthy and safe working environment
- q. Sustainability
- r. Social acceptability
- s. Sharing best practices
- t. Accessibility
- u. Dissemination of information
- v. Racial and social equality
- w. Product lifecycle approaches
- x. Comprehensive, systems-wide approach
- y. Multi-stakeholderism
- z. Outreach and awareness raising
- aa. Environmental social governance
- bb. Climate positive approach

To note: Information on operating principles can be found in section IV of UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/3

Para 22/23

22. Agreement on the operating principles is a means of conveying consensus on several overarching priorities, characteristics or values that shape the interface's work and its deliverables. As noted in the cases above, the interface's principles constitute just one of the documents that guide its work. In the case of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, the International Resource Panel and the Global Environment Outlook, principles are part of larger documents addressing other policies and procedures. The skeleton outline of proposals for the establishment of a science-policy panel, prepared for the second session of the ad hoc open-ended working group, contains a part on operating principles (see UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/2).

23. The examples above show that principles documents are generally brief. They are then operationalized, more or less explicitly, in other documents of the interface. For example, the second principle of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services reads "(b) Be scientifically independent and ensure credibility, relevance and legitimacy through peer review of its work and transparency in its decision-making processes". That principle is operationalized through Decision IPBES 3-3,12 which includes a 25-page annex on procedures for the preparation of platform deliverables. Not all documents guiding an interface's work are explicitly connected to principles. The examples taken from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, the International Resource Panel and the Global Environment Outlook show variation not only in which concepts interfaces have chosen to emphasize under principles but also in how they have chosen to express them. Detailed side-by-side examples related to three concepts (policy relevance, inclusivity/balance and integrity/objectivity) are included in document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF/2.