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#### **Multiscale Scenarios for Nature Futures**

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64 Scenarios are powerful tools to envision how nature might respond to different pathways of future human development and policy choices<sup>1</sup>. Most scenarios developed for global 65 environmental assessments have explored impacts of society on nature, such as biodiversity loss, 66 but have not included nature as a component of socioeconomic development<sup>2</sup>. They ignore 67 policy objectives related to nature protection and neglect nature's role in underpinning 68 69 development and human well-being. This approach is becoming untenable because targets for 70 human development are increasingly connected with targets for nature, such as in the United 71 Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The next generation of scenarios should explore 72 alternative pathways to reach these intertwined targets, including potential synergies and trade-73 offs between nature conservation and other development goals, as well as address feedbacks 74 between nature, nature's contributions to people, and human well-being. The development of 75 these scenarios would benefit from the use of participatory approaches, integrating stakeholders 76 from multiple sectors (e.g., fisheries, agriculture, forestry) and should address decision-makers from the local to the global scale<sup>3</sup>, thereby supporting assessments being undertaken by the 77 78 Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

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# A strategy for IPBES-tailored scenarios

Changes in nature, including biodiversity loss, emerge from interactions between drivers
operating across a wide range of spatial scales, from local to global. Consequences of these
changes, such as loss of ecosystem services supply, also play out across multiple scales.
However, the recent IPBES Methodological Assessment of Scenarios and Models of
Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services showed that scenarios used in global assessments rarely

86 integrate values and processes from sub-regional scales, while scenarios used at local-scale are usually developed for specific contexts, hampering their comparison across regions<sup>1</sup>. 87 88 Furthermore, existing global socioeconomic and climate change scenarios, being used by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change<sup>4</sup>, do not adequately consider nature and its 89 90 contributions to people. Scenarios generated by past initiatives informing global environmental assessments, such as the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment<sup>5</sup>, placed a stronger emphasis on 91 92 nature, yet the socioeconomic pathways explored were similar to those in climate scenarios, and 93 hence included no consideration of social-ecological feedbacks, and limited consideration of 94 multi-scale processes.

95 Here, we outline a strategy to develop a new generation of scenarios that overcome these 96 limitations, in accordance with guidance provided by IPBES<sup>1</sup>, which encouraged close 97 collaboration with the wider scientific community "to develop a flexible and adaptable suite of multi-scaled scenarios specifically tailored to its [IPBES's] objectives"<sup>1</sup>. Our strategy has two 98 99 components: i) the extension of existing global scenarios developed by the climate-science 100 community, by modelling impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services (Figure 1a); and ii) an 101 ambitious effort to create a set of multi-scale scenarios of desirable 'nature futures' that take into 102 account goals for both human development and nature stewardship (Figure 1b).

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# 104 Global biodiversity scenarios driven by socio-economic pathways

Potential global trajectories for drivers of ecosystem change have been recently explored
 by the climate-science community<sup>6</sup>. The Shared Socio-economic Pathways (SSPs) focus on
 exploring a wide range of plausible human development pathways, from slow to fast dynamics

for population growth, economic growth, technological development, trade development and
implementation of environmental policies. The SSPs can be used in combination with
Representative Concentration Pathways (RCP), which describe pathways of greenhouse gas
emissions resulting in different climate change scenarios.

112 Integrated assessment models and global climate models can translate relevant 113 combinations of SSPs/RCPs into land-use change and climate change projections. Existing biodiversity and ecosystem-service models<sup>1</sup> can then be used to translate these projections into 114 115 potential impacts on nature, nature's contributions to people and good quality of life (Figure 1a). 116 Although this approach does not account for drivers of change in biodiversity and ecosystem 117 services operating at regional and sub-regional scales, it enables an assessment of impacts 118 expected from projected changes in land use and climate at the global scale. In contrast with 119 previous analyses, we propose the use of multiple models assessing impacts across diverse 120 dimensions of biodiversity (e.g. species richness, abundance, composition) and ecosystem 121 services (provisioning, regulating, and cultural services). Comparable metrics for biodiversity 122 and ecosystem services (such as Essential Biodiversity Variables) will be needed to harmonize outputs from models addressing each of these dimensions<sup>1,2</sup>. 123

124 Although this initial use of global scenarios based on SSPs/RCPs combinations will 125 continue the tradition of viewing nature as the endpoint in a linear cascade of models (Figure 1a), 126 there is little choice but to retain this approach for informing the IPBES Global Assessment, 127 given its scheduled delivery in 2019. However, this approach will inform the more ambitious and 128 longer term component of this two-step strategy. The second component places nature futures at 129 the center of scenario development and addresses the full range of social-ecological feedbacks

130 (Figure 1b). Scenarios developed by this long-term endeavor will underpin future rounds of131 IPBES regional and global assessments.

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# Visioning Nature Futures

134 The process of developing nature futures will produce multiple, stakeholder-defined 135 endpoints and then explore various pathways for reaching those (Figure 1b). These desirable 136 nature futures should represent a wide range of human-nature interactions, and include a wide 137 variety of different types of human-modified ecosystems encompassing different degrees of 138 human intervention and activity. As in other visioning exercises (Box 1a), nature futures may 139 range from seascapes and landscapes managed for multiple purposes (*i.e.* multi-functional 140 landscapes) to intensely managed, highly productive regions co-existing with wilderness and 141 minimally exploited marine and freshwater ecosystems.

142 We propose an iterative, participatory and creative process, to identify these nature 143 futures (Box 1b). This process will bring together key stakeholders from different sectors, at 144 multiple spatial scales. Stakeholders will include public administration agencies, 145 intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, businesses, civil society, 146 indigenous peoples and local communities, as well as the scientific community. The articulation 147 of nature futures between stakeholders, and spatial scales, will use visualization techniques and 148 other facilitation tools to enrich existing statements of such futures<sup>7</sup>. These visioning exercises 149 will build on emerging efforts at global, regional, and local scales (e.g. Nature Outlook Netherlands<sup>8</sup>, Box 1a). Tools such as scenario archetypes, *i.e.* grouping scenarios together as 150

classes based on similarities in underlying assumptions, storylines, and characteristics, can then
be used to integrate visions, thus highlight conflicts and convergences, across scales<sup>6,9</sup>.

153 At the global scale, nature futures could, for example, explore multiple pathways to achieve the 2050 Strategic Vision of the Convention on Biological Diversity<sup>10</sup>, and work in close 154 155 collaboration with ongoing efforts across others sectors developing visions and pathways for the 156 broader array of Sustainable Development Goals. At the regional scale, nature futures can be 157 informed by the ongoing IPBES regional assessments, which are collecting information on 158 trends of biodiversity and ecosystem services, as well as by national and regional biodiversity 159 targets (e.g. National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans). Local studies, on the other hand, 160 can provide knowledge on how to link nature futures to decision-making, while being inclusive 161 of the diversity of nature values held by different local communities<sup>11</sup>.

162 Once the alternative nature futures have been identified, a range of qualitative and 163 quantitative approaches (e.g. modeling, empirical studies and expert knowledge) can be used to 164 identify potential pathways for reaching these endpoints, including specific policy alternatives, 165 and feedbacks between nature, nature's contributions to people, quality of life and decision-166 making (Figure 1b). These analyses could be carried out in working groups (WGs), focusing on 167 three topics (Figure 1b): 1) models of interactions between biodiversity and ecosystem services; 168 2) social-ecological feedbacks, such as individual and institutional behavioral responses to nature 169 changes and their impact on human well-being; and 3) trajectories of indirect (e.g. 170 socioeconomic changes) and direct drivers (e.g. land-use change) of change and their impacts on

171 nature.

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#### Linking biodiversity with ecosystem services

174 Explicit consideration of links between biodiversity and ecosystem services is limited in 175 most models, and therefore impacts of direct drivers on nature are usually modelled independently of their impacts on nature's contributions to people<sup>2</sup>. However, our knowledge 176 177 about the relationships between biodiversity and ecosystem functioning, and therefore services, has improved greatly<sup>12</sup>. We know now that species composition, and particularly their functional 178 179 identity, or the traits distribution, play a greater role than species richness in shaping ecosystem functioning<sup>13</sup>. Much of this ecological knowledge, acquired at very small scales (e.g.180 181 experimental plots) is still to be incorporated into models of ecosystem services at larger scales. 182 Accounting for the role of biodiversity in the delivery of ecosystem services in each nature future 183 can be accomplished by a combination of appropriate scale choice and application of the most 184 recent empirical, experimental and modelling knowledge. When indicators that are robust across 185 scales are available, methods that work at multiple spatiotemporal scales can be integrated 186 (empirical studies, remote sensing and ecosystem modeling)<sup>15</sup>. 187 Recent work has started to explore how to map at continental scales the spatial distribution of these benefits based on the presence of species with particular traits<sup>14</sup>, opening the 188 189 door to assessments of how regional and global scenarios of indirect and direct drivers of 190 biodiversity change would affect ecosystem services, mediated by changes in species 191 distributions and abundances. Such scenarios are likely to demonstrate that nature's contributions to people depend both on natural and human capital<sup>16</sup>, although their relative importance may 192 193 vary across ecosystem services. Furthermore, scenarios could highlight that the perceived 194 relationship between nature and nature's contributions to people may differ among stakeholder 195 groups, *i.e.* landscape management preferences of farmers, hunters, and tourists differ because

they expect different combinations of services<sup>17</sup>. Inclusion of indigenous and local knowledge
and practices is critical to guarantee that diverse values of nature are captured and integrated.

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## Social-ecological feedbacks

200 In developing this new generation of scenarios, it is vital not only to include key 201 stakeholders in identifying the futures, but also to describe and model how these stakeholders 202 may respond to changes in drivers, biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being 203 associated with each future. Models that couple social and ecological dynamics are now 204 becoming available, demonstrating that insights from social-ecological feedbacks can be critical for anticipating regime shifts<sup>18</sup>. Agent-based and dynamic models can represent how the well-205 206 being of key agents, within each sector and realm, differ in each vision, and how individual responses and actions can impact the drivers' trajectories<sup>19</sup>. 207

Many of these social-ecological feedbacks play out across multiple scales and locations through telecoupling between the production and consumption of ecosystem services<sup>20</sup>, often mediated by trade, but also through institutional and governance linkages<sup>16</sup>. Being able to produce scenarios that show, for example, major relocation of crop production or fisheries as a result of environmental changes<sup>21</sup>, is essential to help policy-makers prepare for potential socioeconomic (transboundary) impacts.

Global and regional policies set the boundaries for national policies, which affect decision-making in local communities. In turn, the decisions of local stakeholders and how they respond and manage different nature trajectories can scale up to determine the dynamics of ecosystem change at regional scales. The development of multi-scale scenarios provides a unique

environment to address these cross-scale social-ecological feedbacks, and their impact on humanwell-being, thereby stimulating further research in this field.

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#### From socio-economic driver trajectories to social-ecological pathways

222 The Shared Socio-Economic Pathways do not adequately incorporate cross-scale 223 dynamics and social-ecological feedbacks involving nature. These shortcomings lead to an 224 underestimation of the effects of telecoupling and of tipping points in ecosystems (such as fisheries collapse or forest to savannah shifts)<sup>22</sup>. By producing multiscale scenarios for nature 225 226 futures enriched with local to regional models of biodiversity and ecosystem services, we can 227 assess how a similar scenario endpoint may produce distinct contributions to people in different areas of the world<sup>23</sup>. This is particularly relevant to broadening the range of drivers assessed in 228 229 current global scenarios of biodiversity, as many drivers are not currently well modelled at the 230 global-scale, but are well understood at local scales – e.g. the impacts of hunting on biodiversity 231 or the impacts of forest loss on pollination. Such work on social-ecological feedbacks and the development of coupled analyses of society, nature and nature contributions to people, may 232 233 ultimately lead to a revised set of Shared Socio-Economic Pathways, in which nature plays a 234 central role alongside existing socioeconomic considerations.

To be successful, the scenario-development process proposed here will require scientific and technological advances to fill knowledge gaps<sup>1</sup> relating to the links between nature, nature's contributions to people and human well-being. It will thus rely on the activities of a broad and interdisciplinary community of scholars studying nature and social-ecological systems, and equally critically, on the engagement of policy makers, practitioners, and other stakeholders.

240	This engagement should occur throughout all stages of scenario development, from the				
241	identification of nature futures, to modelling and analysis, to decision-support and policy				
242	implementation <sup>1</sup> . Only through such continued engagement will scenarios be policy relevant and				
243	effectively used by decision-makers at all scales.				
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288 Figure 1. Two-step strategy to develop the next generation of biodiversity and ecosystem 289 services scenarios to support the activities of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and 290 Ecosystem Services (IPBES). Based on a) Step 1: extend global scenarios developed by the 291 climate modeling community, by carrying out a detailed analysis of impacts on biodiversity and 292 ecosystem services; and b) Step 2: develop novel approach based on participatory nature futures, 293 which can be transformed into scenarios using three working groups (WG): 1) models of 294 interactions between biodiversity and ecosystem services; and 2) social-ecological feedbacks 295 such as individual and institutional behavioral responses to nature changes and their impact on 296 human well-being; 3) trajectories of indirect (e.g. socioeconomic changes) and direct drivers 297 (e.g. land-use change) of change and their impacts on nature. Note: We use the terms 298 biodiversity and nature, and ecosystem services and nature's contributions to people, 299 interchangeably, throughout the text.

