Reflections on the global science-policy interface for food systems

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The UN Food Systems Summit is set to launch in September 2021. In this context, governments are seeking to strengthen the science-policy interface[2] around the multiple dimensions of food systems. The current science-policy interface consists of a broad range of mechanisms and is characterized by considerable fragmentation. A prominent proposal to strengthen this interface is to create a new global science-policy mechanism for better integrated food system knowledge and evidence (e.g. von Braun & Birner 2016; IAP 2018; Fresco 2020). As a recent study by PBL on global science-policy mechanisms highlights, for any such mechanism to be effective, a clear purpose and 'niche' within the wider science-policy interface is required (Maas et al. 2020; Maas et al. submitted). This report informs the discussion on strengthening the global science-policy interface for food systems by analyzing its current gaps and weaknesses and by exploring what options exist to address these.

This report is based on an analysis of the current science-policy interface on food systems (see Annex 1) and draws on informant interviews and relevant literature, including recent literature that proposes an 'Intergovernmental Panel on Food Systems' (or similar terms). In what follows, we first present an analysis of what problems a new mechanism is expected to solve. Our study highlights two gaps as apparent targets of such a mechanism: a knowledge gap – the new mechanism should deliver new knowledge that is currently not available – and a governance gap – the new mechanism should support effective governance action to achieve healthier, more sustainable and equitable food systems. These two gaps are used largely interchangeably in recent calls for a new mechanism, but in our view, they have different implications for strengthening the science-policy interface. We conclude by outlining five options available to policymakers, while noting that no silver bullets exist to strengthen the global science-policy interface for food systems.

Knowledge gap

The global food system encompasses a wide range of dimensions and determinants (e.g. natural resources; diets and consumption; biodiversity; land use; climate change; trade; foreign direct investments; innovation and technology; food security; food crises; and food safety; see also Von Braun & Birner 2016). A broad range of organizations and institutions are currently in place and together make up the science-policy interface for food systems. These include organizations in the UN-system like FAO or IFAD, intergovernmental panels like the IPCC and IPBES, as well as independently operating organizations such as IPES-Food and the Global Panel. Our analysis of this science-policy interface includes 12 of these mechanisms (see Annex 1).

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[2] We use the term 'science-policy *interface*' to refer to the set of different *mechanisms* through which knowledge for policy is produced. Many of these mechanisms are dedicated organizations ('boundary organizations'), but specific reports can also function as a mechanism. Examples of science-policy mechanisms include intergovernmental panels, independent think-tanks, universities, knowledge platforms, reports by temporary commissions, and government research institutes.

Different mechanisms address different dimensions of the food system. The dimensions covered span the spectrum from production to consumption. The mechanisms cover these dimensions from different perspectives, some emphasizing agriculture in their activities, others focused on food security or nutrition. Our analysis makes clear that most dimensions of the food system are covered by at least one mechanism, but no mechanism fully integrates all of them. The one key dimension conspicuous by its absence in the science-policy interface is trade, including its regulatory (e.g. WTO), financial and speculative dimensions, and the telecoupled impacts on land use and biodiversity.

Box 1. High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE)

The **High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE)** is the science-policy interface of the UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS). In 2009, the CFS reformed as the foremost inclusive international and intergovernmental platform for all stakeholders to work together to ensure food security and nutrition for all. At the request of the CFS, the HLPE develops evidence-based analysis and advice to facilitate policy debates and inform policy making.

HLPE reports explicitly bring together different forms of knowledge across disciplines, professional backgrounds and regions. They also build on dialogue with a broad range of stakeholders and knowledge holders.

In practice, the HLPE reports are subject to debate in the CFS, but not to political interference. The most significant limitations facing the HLPE include limited resources (e.g. time and money), and challenges translating findings of the reports into policy negotiations and outcomes.

Mechanisms also differ in terms of the type of knowledge that is generated and assessed and in who the intended audience is. For instance, the activities of an organization like CGIAR are to a large extent focused on on-the-ground application of knowledge and technological innovations, whereas the HLPE has “facilitating policy debates and informing policy making” at the core of its mandate (see also Box 1). The HLPE also has a well-defined target audience in the form of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), a voluntary body of the UN. Meanwhile, mechanisms like the IPCC and IPBES have clear functions towards legally binding elements of global governance (the UNFCC for IPCC, the CBD and several other international treaties for IPBES). Other mechanisms in the science-policy interface are more independent from governments or organizations. These tend to state they “recommend” or “advise” governments, NGOs, civil society, or other stakeholders, but it was not possible to assess the extent to which these ambitions are realized.

Our analysis supports the argument made elsewhere that the science-policy interface for food systems is fragmented (IAP 2018). This fragmentation is seen as problematic because it is seen to lead to a lack of unified problem definitions which hampers the search for effective and legitimate solutions as well as their implementation (Fears et al. 2019; Béné et al. 2019; HLPE 2020). We also note that science-policy-society relations involve tensions and contestations on key areas which shape the production and uptake of assessments including GMO, pesticides, agro-ecology, organic farming and its contribution to food security and food sovereignty, as well as trade – particularly its regulatory, financial and speculative dimensions (IAASTD 2009). As such, the absence of trade as an

important dimension being explicitly covered by a food systems science-policy mechanism can largely be explained by the fact that trade is a major point of contention internationally.

A global science-policy mechanism for food systems may offer a platform to assess and synthesize diverse forms of relevant knowledge, but it is unlikely to solve controversies and tensions. Many challenges within the global food system are wicked problems, characterized by competing understandings of what the problem is and what knowledge is relevant and credible, resulting in disagreements over what tools and options are effective and legitimate. Contestations over GMO or agroecology are a case in point. In such situations, a global science-policy mechanism can play a useful role in mapping the diversity of positions, but it cannot adjudicate between them without taking a value-laden position on what problem definition it prefers, and this has clear risks for its authority and effectiveness. Meanwhile, ignoring or avoiding these value-laden dimensions can detract from the credibility and potential policy-relevance of a mechanism (Pearce et al. 2018). Such a lack of policy-relevance can translate not only to a lack of impact for the mechanism, but also a lack of funding and upfront commitment for it to adequately fulfill its formal mandate. IPBES is often seen as an example of a mechanism that has taken explicit steps to be inclusive of diverse knowledge and value systems (Borie & Hulme 2015; Diaz-Reviriego et al. 2019) and that has been able to combine credibility, legitimacy and relevance. Notably, the HLPE's mandate supports a similar role for balancing different perspectives, but is curtailed in practice (Duncan & Claeys 2018).

The issue of policy relevance and uptake is not straightforward. While organizations like the IPCC and IPBES have a direct audience in the form of the governments who are members and the UN conventions they inform, they also aim to catalyze local action by governments, businesses and societal actors. However, experience from the IPCC shows that it is often difficult for global knowledge to be relevant to the activities of local actors, as well as for local forms of knowledge to inform the global scale (Hulme 2010; Turnhout et al. 2016), an issue also playing up in relation to the UN Food System Summit (Guardian 2021; CSM 2021). We must ask the question: how will a global science-policy mechanism for food systems be able to strike a balance between globally and locally relevant knowledge? This is particularly important since many issues relating to food need to be addressed on the regional, national, or even local level, rather than on the global level (Gertz et al. 2020). It is crucial to consider what additional work would be required to contextualize the results of a global mechanism, empower local actors, and inform locally meaningful and legitimate actions, and this brings us the second key objective of such a new mechanism; to fill the so-called governance gap.

Governance gap

Food systems involve various governance challenges related to nutritiously feeding a growing population while minimizing damage to the planet (EAT-Lancet 2019). While the urgency of these challenges is widely recognized, action to address food security and sustainable agriculture have been lacking (Gertz et al. 2020; SAPEA 2020). This is due, to a large part, to fragmentation in governance regimes (Royal Institute of International Affairs 2019). Whereas fostering a transition of the global food system toward more sustainable outcomes requires collective decision-making within and across jurisdictions, the current regime complex is characterized by a lack of coordination or even conflict between organizations. For instance, in the aftermath of the 2008-2010 global food price crises turf wars occurred between the G8/20, WTO and CFS (Clapp & Murphy 2013; Margulis 2014). The fragmentation of global food system governance is also illustrated by the absence of a global convention on food (like the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement). This fragmentation raises the

question who the primary users of a new mechanism might be and what capacity they have to influence global food systems.

Our analysis emphasizes the importance of political buy-in. The negotiation by governments of the summary for policymakers is seen as one of the factors contributing to the policy relevance of bodies like IPBES and IPCC. Current organizations at the food science-policy interface generally suffer from a lack of political mandate, buy-in, and they are often underfunded. The example of the HLPE shows that even if an organization has a clear (though limited) mandate towards a key mechanism in food system governance (the CFS), its effectiveness still depends strongly on the degree to which governance actors mobilize the knowledge that is produced. Similarly, the contention surrounding trade makes it unlikely that there will be a strong demand among states for it to be addressed in a new science-policy mechanism (as also visible in the CFS and HLPE), which would strongly limit a mechanism's potential effectiveness (Gertz et al. 2020). Thus, in the absence of a clear mandate, demand, and audience, it is doubtful if the shortcomings of global food governance can be addressed by the creation of a novel science-policy mechanism. Improving food governance is first and foremost a political challenge, rather than a scientific one.

Options for a global science policy mechanism for food systems

Several options are available to policymakers seeking to strengthen the science-policy interface on food systems. We stress that none of these options is a silver bullet, with desirability and feasibility varying depending on factors like key beneficiaries of the option, required funding, and political commitment. The options we identify are:

A. Creating an intergovernmental panel or platform
B. Commissioning an ad-hoc Intergovernmental Food Systems Assessment
C. Bolstering the HLPE
D. Strengthening the integration of governance
E. Seizing opportunities in the existing science-policy interface

Option A. Creating an intergovernmental panel or platform

One option is to create a separate panel, like the IPCC or IPBES, that has governments as members. As noted in the introduction, some momentum exists for a new mechanism specifically dedicated to food systems. From our analysis, the key contribution such a mechanism could make is to map and synthesize current knowledge, building on existing organizations at the food system science-policy interface. The mechanism would thereby be able to identify and address questions left unanswered in it, without replicating answers already formulated elsewhere. In so doing, it would avoid replicating current work done by for example the IPCC and IPBES. If this panel is able to serve as a platform for diverse knowledge and value systems, and if it is able to secure the contribution of diverse experts and stakeholders in science, businesses and civil society, such a mechanism could foster increased cooperation, as different food system actors would gain an improved understanding of the playing field. This would need to be carefully guarded in its rules and procedures.

This option potentially scores well when it comes to political buy-in, credibility and authority, but faces considerable challenges with respect to short- to medium-term implementation. First and foremostly, these challenges relate to the time it will take to have a new mechanism up and running. It took seven years of international negotiations to launch IPBES, and only then could it start its assessment work. For food systems, this would mean that it is unlikely that the first assessments could be presented before 2030. Second, significant costs are associated with an intergovernmental panel. Both IPCC and IPBES have yearly budgets that regularly exceed 8 million USD. Third, the wide

range of assessments and the growing workload they imply for the scientific community can significantly hamper appetite for voluntary participation (Jabbour & Flachsland 2017), aside from the challenge of integrating different positions and sources of knowledge described above. Fourth, experience of IPCC and IPBES has shown that there is a reluctance by governments to allow the participation of stakeholders in science, business or society in any kind of decision making or organizational role (although they can contribute to the assessment work if they are selected as experts), which would limit the difference a new mechanism could make in practice.

Option B. Commissioning an ad-hoc Intergovernmental Food Systems Assessment

An alternative to setting up the new intergovernmental body of Option A, would be to organize a single assessment process within an existing intergovernmental structure. The FAO is a likely candidate for this. Decision making about the scope, organization and rules of the assessment and negotiation of the summary for policy makers could be done in special sessions of the FAO Conference. The HLPE could act in an advisory capacity on scientific and technical aspects (much like the IPCC Bureau and IPBES Multidisciplinary Expert Panel). In terms of content, the assessment could aim for a comprehensive overview, or it could focus on filling gaps left by recent or ongoing assessment processes such as the EAT-Lancet report, the IPCC land report, the IPBES global assessment, or the planned IPBES nexus assessment.

This option avoids the high costs and lengthy negotiations involved in option A. By avoiding lengthy negotiations on procedural matters, such an ad-hoc assessment could answer substantive questions in a reasonable timeframe while retaining an intergovernmental character, thereby addressing the limited policy uptake of independent assessments like EAT-Lancet or IPES-Food. However, the strong role of governments does suggest that care must be taken to ensure diverse participation and inclusion of stakeholders and forms of knowledge. Throughout the process, a clearer picture can emerge on whether an institutionalized mechanism is worth pursuing. In a similar vein, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment was a precursor to IPBES.

Option C. Bolstering the HLPE

In many ways, the HLPE is already well-positioned to fulfill the functions a new mechanism would. The HLPE has a strong food system mandate and could be strengthened by increased political commitment and adequate funding. The CFS, while not without challenges,[3] has proven to be an inclusive intergovernmental and multistakeholder space capable of negotiating policy outcomes on a diverse range of topics from across the food system, including food price volatility, social protection, nutrition and food systems, investing in smallholder agriculture, and agroecological approaches and other innovations for sustainable food systems. The structure of the CFS, of one country, one vote, along with the inclusion of five categories of participants (civil society, private sector, research institutes, philanthropic foundations, and other UN agencies) helps to reduce the influence of stronger nation states and interests. Apart from limited resources, a further challenge is that the CFS can only produce policy recommendations and has no mechanism for enforcement.

Option D. Strengthening the integration of governance

Rather than focusing on the science policy interface, efforts could directly target the current fragmentation of governance and the lack of global coordination. Such efforts could focus on improving coordination between different international organizations such as the CFS and WTO or on developing international regulation on food systems. As Von Braun and Birner's (2016) earlier

[3] For an independent evaluation of the CFS (2017), see http://www.fao.org/3/mu231e/mu231e.pdf

proposal suggests, a governance platform specifically set up to coordinate the actions of global actors could also be useful to address the shortcomings of current global food governance. In other words, this option does not approach the shortcomings of global food governance as a consequence of a gap in knowledge, but as resulting from the complexities faced by collective decision-making on food, including a lack of commitment by national governments. A recent report by the Brookings Institution addresses the option of strengthened integration of governance by analyzing the contribution a High-Level Commission could make towards increased progress on SDG2 (Gertz et al. 2020), suggesting three options: (1) a commission focused on carrying forward the outcomes of the UN FSS, (2) a commission proposing reforms to the global governance regime on food systems, or (3) a commission focused on a narrow, specific topic.

Option E. Seizing opportunities in the existing science-policy interface

A final option is to create and seize opportunities in the existing science policy interface, in order to fill current gaps in knowledge. Existing mechanism or organizations, either alone or in collaboration, could be tasked to assess and synthesize knowledge on food systems or do a comprehensive food systems assessment. While this option is unlikely to resolve current problems and challenges in a structural way, it could result in tangible benefits on a relatively short term. For instance, IPBES could be requested to integrate outcomes of the UN Food System Summit in its Nexus Assessment, for which the scoping phase is still ongoing.

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Annex 1 – Table describing organizations in the food systems science-policy interface.[4]

Name	Type	Sector	Role	Position	Organizational structure	Output
CGIAR	Independent, global organization receiving both public and private funds	Agriculture, food, and nutrition sector	To deliver science and innovation that advance transformation of food, land, and water systems in a climate crisis". CGIAR contributes through science-based innovation, it employs targeted capacity development for policymakers, private sector partners, training-of-trainers at the local level, and it offers policy recommendations to both the public and private sector. One of CGIAR's research centers, IFRPI, specifically aims to provide research-based policy solutions to sustainably reduce poverty and end hunger and malnutrition in developing countries.	Independent, but it has many partnerships from different sectors: farmers (small- and medium enterprises), national governments, civil society, NGOs, private sector enterprises, academic and technical institutions, and donors.	CGIAR consists of four bodies: 1. The system council: consists of up to 20 voting members, comprising up to 15 representatives of CGIAR's Funders and five developing country representatives (either Funders, countries hosting a CGIAR Research Center, or countries with significant national agricultural systems). 2. The CGIAR system organization:	Scientific reports (monitoring, evaluation, learning and impact assessment); inform policy

[4] The information contained in this table is based on what is publicly available on the websites of these organizations. Due to the limited scope of this note, we did not engage in an in-depth analysis of the organizations, which would have drawn on e.g. more detailed evaluations and theories of change of the organizations.

					consists of the CGIAR System Board (governs the System Organization) and the System Management Office (responsible for day-to-day operations). 3. An executive management team: three members, in charge of transforming CGIAR into a more integrated and unified organization 4. A CGIAR trust fund: a pooled funding mechanism to support CGIAR's activities	
FAO	Specialized UN-agency	Agriculture, food, and nutrition sector	FAO's mandate, written into the Preamble of the FAO Constitution, consists of four functions: information gathering and dissemination, formulation of	UN mandate, funded by both obligatory and voluntary	Three entities comprise the top-level of FAO's governance	Assessment reports of food security and nutrition/projections of the state of food security and nutrition

			policy recommendations, provision of technical assistance, and assistance to governments with FAO-related obligations. These functions serve the following goals all over the world: Help eliminate hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition; Make agriculture more productive and sustainable; Reduce rural poverty; Ensure inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems; Protect livelihoods from disasters	contributions from member states	structure: the Conference, Council, and Director-General. The FAO Conference is the plenary body of the 194 member states, which meets every two years to review FAO's work, approve a "Programme of Work and Budget" for each biennium, elect the Council and Director-General when their terms expire, and take other decisions as appropriate. Each member state receives one vote in the Conference, and most decisions are made by simple majority, while constitutional changes require	in 2030; identifying challenges to reach SDGs

					a two-thirds majority. In most matters, the Conference approves the proposals presented to it unanimously, although in past years, contentious negotiations over the level of the budget have taken place	
GACSA	Independent, multi-stakeholder platform	Climate smart agriculture	GACSA has three action groups: - The Knowledge Action Group is increasing and promoting knowledge, research, and development into technologies, practices, and policy approaches for CSA. - The Investment Action Group is improving the effectiveness of public and private investments that support the three pillars of CSA. - The Enabling Environment Action Group is promoting the integration of CSA into policy, strategies, and	Voluntary coalition between stakeholders from different sectors.	Governed by its members (500, including governments, NGOs, civil society organizations, and enterprises). The Strategic Committee, led by two co-chairs that serve 1-year terms, oversees the implementation of the program and the main activities of the	Policy (practice) briefs

			planning at regional, national, and local levels and across landscapes.		alliance. The Facilitation Unit serves as the Secretariat and reports to the Strategic Committee	
Global Panel	Independent international group, funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)	Nutrition	Providing recommendations for potential policy interventions at a national and regional level (in low- and middle-income countries); "output will also play a part in the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016 to 2025), with the Foresight report already being used in the development of the United Nations report on Nutrition and Food Systems, 2017" (https://www.glopan.org/about/). Policy recommendations are made for many different types of stakeholders: LMIC governments, HIC governments, international organizations, donors, businesses, civil society advocacy groups, and even individual citizens	Independent, but collaborates with other international organizations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation	12 panel members who come from both public and private sectors (i.e. governments, regional bodies, the private sector and civil society) (SUN, 2013). It has a Secretariat	Policy briefs; foresight reports about challenges of the 21st century
HLPE	Science-policy interface of CFS	Food security and nutrition	The HLPE aims to facilitate policy debates and inform policy making by providing independent, comprehensive and evidence-based analysis and advice at the request of CFS. (FAO: HLPE Home)	The HLPE is directed by CFS. CFS reports to the UN General Assembly and the FAO conference. It receives its funding	HLPE has a steering committee that consists of 15 internationally recognized experts in a	Synthesis reports based on scientific knowledge that include policy recommendations

			- Assess and analyze the current state of food security and nutrition and its underlying causes. - Provide scientific and knowledge-based analysis and advice on specific policy-relevant issues, utilizing existing high quality research, data and technical studies. Identify emerging issues, and help members prioritize future actions and attentions on key focal areas	equally from FAO, IFAD, and WFP	variety of food security and nutrition related fields. It also has project teams that act on a project-specific basis, which are selected and managed by the steering committee. The project teams analyze and report on specific issues	(latest report is on food security and nutrition)
IFAD	International financial institution and specialized UN agency	Agriculture, food, and nutrition sector	Supports small-scale farmers through collaborating with them and helping them secure land tenure, get access to markets, capital and knowledge, reliable infrastructure, tools and technology, seeds and fertilizers, and good governance. - Enabling policy and regulatory frameworks at national and international levels. - Increased levels of investment in the rural sector. Improved country-level capacity for rural policy and program	UN mandate. Funded by member states as well as other organizations from both the public and private sector. IFAD works with governments and other local partners to identify the obstacles to rural development and design targeted country-specific solutions. IFAD also helps governments to implement	Governed by the Governing Council, which is the main decision-making body. It consists of representatives ('Governors') of all IFAD's member states. From the members, a Governing Council Bureau is formed consisting of	Programme evaluation; impact evaluation

			development, implementation and evaluation	existing policies, and to monitor and evaluate their impacts. (Policy engagement (ifad.org)). IFAD also collaborates with partners that have complementary areas of expertise, including the Rome-based agencies, member states, development institutions, the private sector, and foundations. It also facilitates "multi-stakeholder partnerships between governments, the private sector and small-scale rural producers"	three people who serve for two years, elected by the members. An Executive Board is responsible for overseeing day-to-day operations, and membership of this board is determined by the Governing Council. The Executive Board's 18 members serve three-year terms. The Executive Board is led by the IFAD President, who is selected by the member-states and serves a four-year term that is renewable once	
International Resource Panel	Science-policy platform under UNEP	Resources	Building and sharing knowledge needed to improve the use of resources worldwide	Panel under UNEP, but it provides independent scientific		Scientific assessments of policy relevance and policy recommendations

				assessments of policy relevance on the sustainable use of natural resources and, in particular, their environmental impacts. IRP contributes to a better understanding of how to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation		
IPBES	Intergovernmental organization	Biodiversity and ecosystem services	The activities of IPBES include assessments, policy support (identifying policy-relevant tools and methodologies, facilitating their use, and catalyzing their further development.), building capacity and knowledge (identifying and meeting the priority capacity, knowledge and data needs of our member States, experts and stakeholders), and communication & outreach to ensure the widest reach and impact of its work.	Independent intergovernmental body established by the member states, but has close linkages with UNEP, UNESCO, FAO, and UNDP	Governed by the plenary, which consists of the representatives of IPBES member states.	Assessment reports of existing knowledge; new instruments for assessment
IPCC	Intergovernmental organization	Climate Change	Reviewing and synthesizing science on the topics of the physical science of climate change, climate change adaptation, and climate change mitigation. IPCC reports	United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change	IPCC is governed by its member states (the IPCC plenary), which select a Bureau	Assessments and synthesis reports of existing knowledge

			provide practical guidelines for the preparation of greenhouse gas inventories under the UNFCCC		of scientists for the duration of each assessment cycle	
IPES-Food	IPES-Food is an independent panel of experts with a mission to promote transition to sustainable food systems around the world	Agriculture, food, and nutrition sector	To inform policy debates on food systems reform through empirical research and direct engagement in policy processes around the world. The research projects conducted by the Association aim to advocate for more just and sustainable food systems. The Association also aims to forge links between different food system actors and groups, by encouraging, promoting and supporting other organizations and processes to accelerate the transition to sustainable systems and diets.	Politically independent; it receives grants from various sources: foundations and other private organizations, public funds, donations, and legacies	15-25 experts who are appointed for 3-year terms, these compose the 'General Assembly'. The GA elects two chairs after the initial 3 years, during which 2 co-founding members take on the function. Additionally, iPES Food has a Board of Directors, which is the executive body, and a Secretariat	Research reports; Policy briefs
UNEP	UN organization	Other sectors relevant to agriculture, food, and nutrition	UNEP provides leadership and encourages partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. UNEP's work includes assessing global, regional and	UN organization; relies on voluntary contributions for 95% of its income, including from governments (it has 193 member states), other public organizations, the	Headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, UN Environment Programme is led by a Senior Management Team that's chaired by an	Global assessment reports; environmental instruments

			national environmental conditions and trends; developing international and national environmental instruments; and strengthening institutions for the wise management of the environment	private sector, and foundations.	Executive Director. We work through 8 divisions (a science division, policy and program division, ecosystems division, governance affairs office, law division, communication division, and corporate services division), regional, liaison and out-posted offices, plus a growing network of collaborating centres of excellence. UNEP also hosts several environmental conventions, secretariats and inter-agency coordinating bodies	
UNESCO	UN organization	Cultural heritage,	UNESCO seeks to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and	UN organization with a specific mandate in the	UNESCO has a General Conference that	Monitoring and assessment reports

		education, and science	Culture. It develops educational tools to help people live as global citizens; it aims to achieve access to quality education for all children; it aims to strengthen bonds between countries by promoting cultural heritage and equal dignity of all cultures; it fosters scientific programs and policies as platforms for development and cooperation as well as open access to knowledge. In relation to the science-policy interface specifically: UNESCO aims to strengthen its participation in global partnerships to bridge the science-policy interface and to lead inter-agency efforts to reinforce consideration of indigenous knowledge systems in the IPBES and IPCC.	sciences. It promotes international scientific cooperation and integrated scientific approaches to support Member States in effectively managing natural resources, reducing knowledge divides within and among countries, and building bridges for dialogue and peace	consists of the member states, which determines the policies and the main lines of work of the organization. It elects members of the Executive Board, which is in charge of the overall management of UNESCO. It also has a Secretariat, which is the executive branch of the organization. It is led by the Director-General, who is elected by the General Conference, and serves a term of four years. The Director-General appoints staff (about 700 staff members).	