

**INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR  
GLOBAL CHANGE RESEARCH  
(IAI)**

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To: Chair Executive Council  
Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research

From: Members of the Working Group in charge of the preparation of Terms of Reference (ToR) for IAI External Review Committee (ERC)

Date: 27 June, 2001

The Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI) was established by the Declaration of Montevideo in 1992. Since its beginning, the IAI has established science programs and related activities and it is now appropriate for an external evaluation or review of the IAI to be undertaken.

The review of the IAI should be done in terms of the Objectives of the IAI, given in Article II of the Agreement. It should also be forward looking, providing advice and recommendations that will help to define the path or “compass” for the IAI in the next decade.

The Seventh Conference of the Parties created a Working Group in charge of the preparation of Terms of Reference (ToR) for IAI External Review Committee (ERC) and tasked it with providing advice to EC on the ToR and guidance for the conduct of the external review. The members of the Subcommittee reviewed the procedures established by other international organizations, including the International Council for Science (ICSU), and by national organizations (such as those conducted in countries where the members have been personally involved). The collective experience of the Subcommittee was valuable in preparing these recommendations.

It will be very important that the External Review Committee be established with a membership of high international visibility and credibility. The ERC should have about 6 members, with no less than half being persons without direct involvement in the IAI. The Subcommittee recommends that they should be senior individuals, who have well-recognized international perspectives and reputations and experience in global environmental change issues. They should collectively have experience in and been seen to be representative of international global change science, national governments and international development assistance agencies. It is further recommended that the ERC have members who have previous, but not present, involvement with the IAI, such as previous chairs of the EC and the SAC. The ERC chair should be selected from among the non-IAI members. The ERC should be assisted by a secretariat that would include a small number (perhaps 2) experts or consultants in the field of program evaluation with the IAI Secretariat providing additional support for logistics and analysis.

The recommendations of the ERC should be based on the premise that the IAI, to be considered successful and valuable, must be seen to make a difference to governments. Many national and international scientific activities on global change science take place, but the role of IAI is to make a difference. This difference should be evident in terms of the quality and type of scientific global change programs that specifically address the needs and concerns of governments to meet national needs and their interests under appropriate international conventions, such as the conventions on biodiversity, climate change, desertification and pollutants. IAI should result in expanded collaboration among the member countries, enhanced capacity within the countries and the

completion of scientific projects, that can be applied to improve social well being in the IAI member countries.

It is important that the ERC use in its review, indicators of progress and impacts that can demonstrate the value of the IAI and its activities. These indicators would include:

- changes in and sustainability of the scientific activities in global environmental change within countries,
- development of national capacity (including the continuation of scientist activities in environmental research), and
- value to and recognition by governments of the IAI.

The External Review needs to be credible, transparent and timely. In that regard, the Subcommittee recommends that the evaluation be commenced at this coming CoP and that its report and recommendations can be considered in the CoP 2002.

With these principles in mind the Working Group has provided, for the EC's consideration, revised ToR for the ERC and a background document that provides expanded sets of questions for consideration and assistance to the ERC in their work.

Respectively submitted by members of Working Group in charge of the preparation of Terms of Reference (ToR) for IAI External Review Committee (ERC)

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## **IAI External Review Committee**

### **Terms of Reference** **Draft**

#### **Mandate:**

The IAI External Review Committee (ERC) is to undertake a review of the IAI and its activities with a focus on its institutional and programmatic development. The review of the IAI should be done in terms of the Objectives of the IAI, given in Article II of the Agreement. It should also be forward looking, providing advice and recommendations that will help to define the path or “compass” for the IAI in the next decade. The review is to be credible, transparent and timely.

#### **Membership**

The membership of the External Review Committee should be 6 members of high international visibility and credibility, with no less than half being persons without direct involvement in the IAI. The members should be senior individuals, who have well-recognized international perspectives and reputations and experience in global environmental change issues. They should collectively have experience in and been seen to be representative of international global change science, national governments and international development assistance agencies. Members should include persons with previous, but not present, involvement with the IAI, such as previous chairs of the EC and the SAC. The ERC chair should be selected from among the non-IAI members.

#### **Working arrangements**

Even though much of the ERC work could be done by correspondence and email, travel for ERC members to gather information and conduct interviews with appropriate representatives of governments and the scientific community will be necessary. The ERC should be assisted by a secretariat that could include a small number (perhaps 2) experts or consultants in the field of program evaluation with the IAI Secretariat providing additional support for logistics and analysis.

#### **Focus of review**

##### **General**

The focus of the review will be on how the IAI has made a difference to governments and people of the hemisphere. The IAI should result in expanded collaboration among the member countries, enhanced capacity and ability of countries to meet commitments under international environmental agreements, and the completion of scientific projects that can be applied to improve social well being in the IAI member countries.

##### **Specific**

The review should address the following IAI issues and should be done, where possible, in terms of indicators or measures of the impacts of IAI programs and the changes that are made to improve their impact:

- Mechanisms for evolution and self analysis;
- Evolution of the IAI, including participation of countries, associated activities within countries and links beyond the IAI members;
- Development of networks and cooperation among research activities within IAI countries;

- Expansion of funding base;
- Processes for establishment of program priorities;
- Progress in evolution of scientific agenda to the broad range of global change disciplines, including the social, engineering and medical sciences;
- Improvements of scientific capability, infrastructure and productivity;
- Effectiveness of IAI management and structure, including meetings, executive and administrative organs, and communication and dissemination of results.

(Note: a set of questions have been provided as suggestions for consideration by the ERC.)

**Timing**

The evaluation is to commence in August 2001 and the report and recommendations should be completed within 1 year.

## Suggested Questions for External Review

### Institutional Development

1. Does the IAI have mechanisms to evaluate and, as appropriate, modify the terms of the IAI Agreement in the context of the changing global and national circumstances?
2. Does IAI have mechanisms to undertake an analysis of its strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats, both internal and external, and to develop and implement a strategic plan?
3. Does IAI have a “legacy” vision –what will be the long-term implications of its programs and activities, with respect to infrastructure, people, research results and sustained attitudes?
4. How has country participation evolved?
  - Has the number of countries who are IAI members changed and why?
  - What is the level of participation by member countries within IAI, in terms of financial support, participation in the IAI executive organs and research meetings and in research programs?
  - What is the level of activity relative to IAI, within countries? For example, are there national committees? Is there participation of the private sector, universities and other levels of government in IAI activities?
  - Has the IAI developed links with countries who are not member of the IAI? Have flexible arrangements, such as associate membership, been considered?
5. How has the IAI promoted cooperation among research institutions within the region and in other regions?  
 Note Article II
  - g) Promote cooperation among the different research institutions of the region; and
  - h) Promote cooperation with research institutions in other regions.
6. How effective have been the IAI executive organs (Conference of the Parties, Executive Council, Scientific Advisory Committee, and Directorate)? Have they been effective and what are their accomplishments?
  - Are the meetings of the IAI executive organs as effective as they could be? Are their frequency of meetings and decision- making processes appropriate and effective? Has the participation of members evolved?
  - In this context, do the IAI Articles need revision, and, if so, how?
7. Has the funding base for research and activities been expanded and are the present programs or their expansion sustainable? How have non-governmental sources of funds, such as international agencies, private sector funding agencies, etc., become involved in providing support for the IAI?
8. Are the IAI program management, administrative and physical arrangements appropriate for the evolving situation?
  - Is there capacity for lobbying, pursuing funding opportunities and examining different financial mechanisms, such as endowments and revolving funds?
9. How effective are the mechanisms for communication and dissemination of results?
  - Consideration of effectiveness should include how the results are being used in public and private sectors? The review should consider the private sector, such as utilities, insurance companies, and natural resource companies, as well as governments.
  - A survey of how the IAI is perceived in various sectors and countries should be considered.

**Note Article II**

- *f) Improve public awareness and provide scientific information to governments for the development of public policy relevant to global change;*

**Programmatic Development**

1. How are programmatic priorities established and what are the mechanisms for project evaluation? How are scientific and regional relevance decided and evaluated?

*Note Article II*

- *b) Conduct or select for sponsorship scientific programs and projects on the basis of their regional relevance and scientific merit as determined by scientific review.*
2. What are the improvements in scientific capability and research infrastructure in member countries? How many scientists have been trained and where and how are they now employed (development of sustained human capacity)?
  3. How effective have been the IAI DIS and the WMO/UNDP projects and are their results still being used? Is there a plan to ensure their long-term benefits?

*Note Article II*

- *e) Foster standardization, collection, analysis and exchange of scientific data relevant to global change;*
4. What are the measures of scientific productivity of the supported research and how can its output be measured in terms of provision of relevant information to policy and decision makers? Is IAI making the transition from a focus on natural sciences to balanced agenda with natural, social, engineering and medical sciences all participating?

*Note Article II*

- *a) Promote regional cooperation for interdisciplinary research on aspects of global change related to the sciences of the earth, ocean, atmosphere, and the environment and to social sciences, with particular attention to impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity, socio-economic impacts, and technologies and economic aspects associated with the mitigation of and adaptation to global change;*
5. How successful has the IAI been in terms of network development? Have these networks become self-sustaining, or is there a plan towards this objective?

*Note Article II*

- *c) Pursue on a regional scale that research which cannot be pursued by any individual State or institution and dedicate itself to scientific issues of regional importance;*