

Talking Points for Canada's Intervention
Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research
IAI Forum- Moving forward- 10 Anniversary of the entry into force of the
"Montevideo Declaration"
July 1, 2004

Ladies and Gentlemen

- I speak today on behalf of Dr. Everell, Canada's official representative to the Conference of the Parties and Executive Council
- On this occasion, the 10th anniversary of the entry into force of the Agreement of Montevideo, it is appropriate to reflect on the past and our country's involvement with the IAI.
- Our esteemed colleagues provided thoughtful insights into the value of the IAI accomplishments over the past decade
- As many of you may know, Canada was a founding partner of the IAI signing the agreement in March of 1993 and ratifying that agreement in June of that year
- Active participation at the CoP and EC has been through the Meteorological Service of Environment Canada and its Assistant Deputy Minister
- I have been privileged to have participated in recent meetings on Dr. Everell's behalf
- Canada, I believe, recognized early on that anthropogenic global change was a reality
- It was appropriate, therefore, that we support an organization dedicated to augmenting the scientific capacity of the region and to providing information in a useful and timely manner to policy makers on all aspects of global change.
- Canada's role in IAI role has included membership in the Scientific Advisory Committee almost since the beginning, and most recently, we were pleased to host the 20th meeting of the SAC in our capital city, Ottawa, this past April.
- It is notable as well that Canada also hosted the COP/EC in 1999

- We are proud that two CRN 1 projects are lead by Canadian scientists and that their efforts have been so successful both in activities in terms of good science as well as the ability to leverage additional resources.
- I applaud the work and dedication of all the scientists involved in all the CRN activities
- Canada continues to support the original goals of the IAI which were to build a capacity in the region for research and to build a mechanism for dialogue with government policy-makers to ensure a solid foundation of science for wise decision making
- Canada believes that good science is being done through IAI; and that the scientific program of the IAI is having a positive impact on the scientific capacity in the southern hemisphere
- Closer to home, the IAI science agenda on Changes in the Composition of the Atmosphere, Oceans and Fresh Waters continues to be a priority in Canada.
- In addition, renewed efforts are underway in Canada to align and integrate our observing efforts with the Global Earth Observations (GEO) initiative.
- In many ways, the international GEO initiative under the five themes of user requirements; international cooperation; capacity building; architecture; and data utilization are directly relevant to the IAI science agenda under themes III and IV.
- Furthermore, I believe that the policy relevance of IAI science to the issues of importance to IAI member states will be key to IAI's future success
- Dr. Everell in a recent letter to IAI suggested that perhaps greater attention and support for inter-American science assessments could be included in future IAI science agendas as the bridging mechanism between science and policy
- Canada's experience has been that science assessments on, for example, acid precipitation, ground-level ozone, stratospheric ozone, hazards, water, biodiversity have been effective mechanisms to integrate our understanding of the state of knowledge into policy.
- That being said, I believe, as do others, that the IAI is at a **crucial** point in its evolution
- IAI has achieved considerable over the past 10 or so years, as alluded to by our guest speakers and other country representatives, but the current

funding situation is a symptom of a lack of engagement with governments of member countries.

- Recent initiatives to address the situation are encouraging but have met with limited success
- Unfortunately, I believe, we as parties to IAI are faced with two choices.- fix the problem or allow IAI to spiral downward
- The latter is not, I believe, an option
- However, until the current critical issues are fixed, other issues which were to be addressed during this forum, such as "where we want the IAI to go" are at best, moot.
- **So what can be done?**
- Re-engagement of member states is a complex task that requires a well thought-out and integrated strategy which deliberately brings IAI science and scientists into the realm of national environmental policy.
- It is imperative that the IAI Director take the lead in developing and implementing the re-engagement strategy
- It is also up to each of the members to ensure linkages and **on-going** commitment
- One tool to assist members may be active national committees for the IAI
- I recognize that it's not a simple task to engage governments/academia within a country,
- Mechanisms in Canada to oversee IAI-Canada engagement have shifted and there is at this time no single national forum for IAI
- It **conclusion**, I would like to say that if IAI is to thrive and continue to discuss the road ahead it must engage governments more broadly and forge stronger relationships with intergovernmental organizations.
- This re-engagement process is in its early stages and will continue to be a significant challenge for the Director
- It must however be given a very high priority
- Only with strengthened engagement can we discuss " what it is that IAI should pursue to benefit Member countries".

- Rather than a debate on where this vehicle we call the IAI should be headed, the debate must be on how we fix the engine.
- I look forward to the Round Table session this afternoon; to work together to address some of the challenges facing the IAI to ensure that it is a relevant and effective vehicle for Global Change Research in our region.
- Thank you for your attention.

Approved

M. D. Everell

18 June, 2004