



Professional Development Seminar: Transdisciplinary Approaches to Integrating Policy and Science for Sustainability

*Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic, 28 November – 2 December 2016 and
Calgary, Canada, 29 May -2 June 2017*

What?

The Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI) announces a Professional Development Seminar (PDS) on Transdisciplinary approaches to linking policy and science for sustainability. The seminar is funded by the IAI with resources from the National Science Foundation (NSF). An additional co-sponsor is the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). The seminar will involve two sessions. The first session will be held 28 November - 2 December 2016, in Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic; the second one will be held 29 May – 2 June 2017 in Calgary, Canada. Between sessions, participants will continue to interact among themselves and with IAI staff and seminar instructors through facilitated online mechanisms.

Why?

The main goal of the PDS is to train future leaders in global change science, policy and management. The complexity of global change phenomena, problems and their impact on societies involve socioeconomic, biophysical, and technological dimensions. Addressing them properly requires effective communication and collaboration between scientists and those making and affected by sustainability policy. However, interaction among different types of scientists, society, and decision-makers is not easy. The seminar will present and provide practical training on skills to encourage teamwork and facilitate these interactions.

Who?

Up to 25 participants from IAI member countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela) covering a diversity of roles in decision-making and research including: (1) policy decision-makers from different tiers and sectors of government (e.g. agriculture, finance, science and technology, environment and natural resources, international affairs); (2) graduate students, early to mid-career scientists and faculty in the humanities, and social, natural and engineering sciences; (3) NGOs and community organization staff and (4) private sector employees.

We strongly encourage applications from participants of various backgrounds including social and natural scientists, humanities scholars, and staff from NGO and community organizations, the private sector, and government agencies.



Objectives and content

The seminar will train participants in transdisciplinary approaches in global change-related projects, such as agriculture, land use, public health, sustainable development, biodiversity, energy, water, air, and climate.

The PDS will enable participants to collaborate across diverse interests, sectors, and institutional arrangements. During the seminar, participants will work together in transdisciplinary teams to develop research questions of common interest, identify potential sources of funding, and design research proposals to address these research questions. This will require that participants develop skills to communicate across different disciplines, value others' perspectives and points of view, and engage in productive teamwork with people from different disciplines and types of organizations. Participants will have opportunities to learn to: a) form effective collaborative teams, b) enhance transdisciplinary teamwork skills, and c) identify effective pathways to share findings, tools, and approaches with non-academic collaborators.

First PDS session: The seminar to take place in the Dominican Republic will address and include:

- Why is transdisciplinary research important?
- Successful examples of transdisciplinary projects.
- The science of successful team collaboration.
- Identifying relevant decision-makers' problems.
- Communication between disciplines and between science and policy.
- Field visits related to sustainable agriculture, environmental issues, and climate change adaptation.
- International collaboration.
- Science-Diplomacy.
- Skills in transdisciplinary proposal writing.
- Identifying transdisciplinary proposal funding sources.

Intersession: Between the first and second sessions, groups established at the first session will work on their project proposal development. The groups will interact online, "meeting" virtually (about once or twice a month) with IAI staff and seminar facilitators to review progress in proposal development and identifying potential project funding sources. Virtual meetings may include additional tutoring on topics explored in the first session.

Second PDS session: The second session in Canada will address and include:

- Project assessment.
- Peer to peer feedback.
- Elements for successful teamwork.



- Team formation, management, and assessment.
- Role-playing games - participants taking and experiencing different roles.
- Incorporating teamwork skills into participant development.
- Revising and finalizing transdisciplinary participant team proposals.

Application Information

Language requirement: The program will be carried out in both English and Spanish. Therefore, applicants must be proficient in one and have a sound understanding of the other language in order to understand, communicate, and participate actively.

Application process:

1. You will find the application forms and instructions at <http://www.iai.int/?p=15424>.
2. Besides the two forms, you will have to submit a short CV (up to 2 pages) and a reference letter your immediate supervisor indicating the interest of your organization on having you involved in the seminar and the expected benefits that such participation can have on the institutions daily activities. Send the files to Mariana Toledo at: IAI.dominicana2016@dir.iai.int
3. We will send you a confirmation email, upon reception of your application

Applications are due by the end of the day of **August 15, 2016** (midnight Montevideo time, Uruguay).

Official Seminar website (in English): <http://www.iai.int/?p=12698>

Each applicant must clearly state the reasons for his/her personal and professional interest in the seminar and why he/she should be selected to participate.

It is expected that applicants commit to participate actively in the two in-person sessions and the work and tasks to be developed in between. Nevertheless, participation in the first session does not automatically qualify for the second session. Acceptance for the second part will be communicated only after the evaluation of participant's engagement in the seminar's activities, products, and outputs.

Financial Support: Full and/or partial travel support is available for a limited number of participants. Participants will be selected based on the merit of the application and relevance of the professional and institutional work to the seminar themes. In addition, co-funding by applicant's home institution is encouraged and will be also considered. There are no application or seminar fees. Applicants who are selected and participate actively in all sessions and activities of the PDS will receive a seminar completion certificate. If you need further information contact us at IAI.dominicana2016@dir.iai.int

PDS organizing committee members:

Gabriela **Alonso** Yanez, University of Calgary



Nathalie **Flores** Gonzalez, Dominican Republic Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources

Carol **Franco**, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Marga **Gual** Soler, American Association for the Advancement of Science

Kathleen E. **Halvorsen**, Michigan Technological University

Alex S. **Mayer**, Michigan Technological University

Marcella **Ohira**, Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research

Valentin D. **Picasso** Risso, University of Wisconsin-Madison