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18 June 2018

**2nd JOINT MEETING OF THE
SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND THE
SCIENCE-POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TO THE INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR
GLOBAL CHANGE RESEARCH
Antigua, Guatemala, 18 June 2018**

**Report of the 2nd Joint Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee and the Science
Policy Advisory Committee**

1. This document has been prepared by the IAI Directorate.

Introduction

2. The Second Joint Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and the Science Policy Advisory Committee (SPAC) was held in Antigua, Guatemala, on 18 June 2018. It recommended that the Conference of the Parties consider three decisions related to the SPAC and to the drafting of new IAI Strategic Plan. The draft decisions are provided under Agenda item 5 of this report.
3. The Conference of the Parties, at its 25th meeting (Bogota, 2017), adopted Decision XXVI/19, *Joint SAC, SPAC and EC-CoP meetings* which states:

The CoP directed the Directorate to ensure that SAC, SPAC and EC-CoP meetings overlap to favor interaction.

4. The SAC, in its report of the meeting of 10 June 2017, which was held back-to-back with the 43rd meeting of the Executive Council (EC) and on the margins of CoP-25 (Bogota, 2017), stated:

The SAC welcomes the opportunity to increase our interaction with the CoP. The organization of the SAC meeting back-to-back with the CoP meeting is an important initiative to this end. Moreover, the joint workshop during the first day of the CoP meeting will be an excellent opportunity to exchange ideas about how to improve the work of the IAI and how to maximize the advise that the SAC can provide to the CoP the main purpose of the work of the SAC. We are ready to engage in this dialogue with the CoP and look forward to working together to continue improving the excellent work that IAI is doing in the Americas.

5. The SPAC, at its meeting of 10 June 2017, which was held back-to-back with 43rd meeting of the Executive Council and on the margins of CoP-25, submitted a message to Parties to:

Organize CoP meetings back to back with SAC/SPAC.

6. The Second Joint Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and the Science Policy Advisory Committee (SPAC) was held in Antigua, Guatemala, on 18 June 2018.

7. SAC and SPAC members were invited to attend. The following members attended:
SAC: Dr. Edwin Castellanos (Chair), Dr. Antonio Rocha Magalhães, Dr. Elena Abraham, Dr. Josh Tewksbury, Dr. Reynaldo Luiz Victoria, Dr. Susana Beatriz Adamo, Dr. Tereza Cavazos

SPAC: Dr. Brigitte Baptiste (Chair), Dr. Evelia Rivera Arriaga, Dr. Javier Gracia-Garza, Dr. Walter E. Baethgen

Observers: Dr. Maria Uhle

The following SAC members sent their regrets: Dr. Michelle Grunauer, Dr. Carlos Joly, and Dr. Alicia Fernandez

The following SPAC members sent their regrets: Dr. James Rusak, Dr. Maria Netto Schneider, and Dr. Gilberto Camara

Opening remarks of the Chair of the SAC, Chair of the SPAC and the Executive Director

8. Dr. Edwin Castellanos, Chair of the SAC and Dr. Brigitte Baptiste, Chair of the SPAC opened the meeting on 18 June 2018 at 9:15am. The IAI Executive Director welcomed all participants expressing gratitude for their support and advice to the IAI. During the opening session, committee members and Directorate staff introduced themselves.

Agenda item 1: Welcome by the Chairs of the SAC and the SPAC

9. Dr. Castellanos listed the agenda items to be addressed and suggested that the two advisory committees hold separate meetings from 11:00am to 12:00pm.

10. There was agreement to hold separate meetings from 11:00am to 12:00pm.

Agenda item 2: Approval of the agenda

11. The agenda was approved.

Agenda item 3: Summary of activities related to the Small Grants Program

12. The Chair invited the IAI Directorate to present a report of the activities related to the co-funded Small Grant Program (SGP): the role of ecosystem services in adaptation to global change for human wellbeing (SGP-HW). The Directorate reported that 91 pre-proposals were received and 24 of those were forwarded to the SAC for their review following the initial pre-screening by the Directorate staff and SAC member Dr. Carlos Joly.
13. Out of the 23 pre-proposals reviewed, a final group of 11 pre-proposals were selected to move forward to the transdisciplinary workshop. As per the Call, from the pre-proposals received, 3 members of up to 10 teams will be invited to participate in a week-long proposal writing workshop to ensure transdisciplinary problem framing, co-design and team building, while maintaining high standards of research and scholarship. The workshop will bring together researchers with relevant stakeholders to co-design the proposed research and to jointly create results models to link actions to outcomes.
14. Participants discussed the benefits and obstacles related to the organization of the transdisciplinary training phase of the grant. The Directorate described the envisioned process and participants discussed the pros and cons of having face-to-face versus virtual meetings. Participants concluded that the ideal and most useful would be to develop a hybrid where participants would have the opportunity to meet face-to-face but would complete components of the training through an online system. The Directorate was asked to develop a plan that would include both online and physical meetings for the workshop. The final number of proposals will depend on the total funds available for these projects, which is estimated to reach five projects.
15. Participants stressed the need to include transdisciplinarity in the project design, particularly during the early phases. They also identified the importance of presenting a definition of transdisciplinarity for the projects.
16. The Directorate informed participants that a strategic objective of the SGP-HW call is to develop a method of long-distance electronic education as a model that could be used for Parties and other organizations, which would enhance awareness of the IAI's training programs and capacity and also reflect the IAI's leading role in the development of training in interdisciplinary science.
17. The IAI Executive Director highlighted the peer review responsibility assigned to the SAC by the *Agreement establishing the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research*, Article VII, *The Scientific Advisory Committee*, paragraph 4b:

Direct the peer review system of the Institute, ensuring through its rules of procedure that individual Committee members do not participate in the evaluation of proposals which they have themselves submitted.

18. He continued by stating that the SAC's advice in light of Article VII is essential to the successful selection of pre-proposals received under the SGP-HW. The SAC Chair added that the SAC should discuss the best process to peer review the proposals.
19. The IAI Directorate acknowledged with gratitude the work of SAC member Dr. Carlos Joly, particularly his contribution and support in the review of the 91 pre-proposals received. The IAI Directorate also noted the assistance of Dr. Alicia Cirelli and Dr. Michelle Grunauer.

Agenda item 4: Summary by the SAC Chair of activities related to the SGP-HW

20. Under agenda item 4, participants discussed the role of the IAI as an intergovernmental organization at the intersection of science to policy. The SAC Chair summarized the Decisions adopted at CoP-25 (Bogota, 2017) directed at the IAI Directorate which resulted from recommendations by the SAC and SPAC made at their first joint meeting. The SAC Chair also summarized the recommendations made at the first Science-Policy workshop which were presented to CoP-25 for its consideration.
21. Participants discussed how to "coach" projects so that their results are made aware to policy makers. They continued by mentioning that projects could also receive guidance from the IAI on special issues, such as water security, climate change, capacities and technology transfer, among other topics of research.
22. The Executive Director stated that the SGP-HW call included criteria related to targets under the frameworks adopted by multilateral environmental agreements and organizations. These criteria aimed to facilitate use of project results by Parties to reach the many targets under such frameworks. He added that understanding the priorities of Parties at the national level and articulated at the regional and international levels was important in increasing the relevancy of project results to policy makers. He also mentioned that during the upcoming CoP-26, Parties would have the opportunity to discuss how they could provide such information to the IAI Directorate for the development of future action.
23. Participants discussed how Parties could make known their priorities on climate change to the IAI Directorate. The SPAC Chair stated how the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) is assisting governments to reach more coherent decisions which in turn would facilitate the work of IAI Parties on issues regarding biodiversity and ecosystem services research.
24. Dr. Gracia-Garza asked if CoP members had been asked to identify their priorities and the Executive Director indicated that the Directorate had requested the information from Parties bilaterally.
25. Dr. Uhle suggested the EC-SAC-SPAC Science-Policy workshop could suggest a means to actively engage Parties in this dialogue with a view to facilitating communication of their national needs and priorities.

Agenda item 5: The role of the SPAC, SAC and enhancement of coordination and collaboration

26. There was consensus among the participants that the SAC and SPAC should work more closely together. The IAI Executive Director noted that the SAC was established under the *Agreement*, which specifies its role, membership and mandate. He continued by recalling that the SPAC is the result of Decision XXI/13 adopted at CoP-21 (Montevideo, 2013). He continued by stressing that there is a need to draft rules of procedure for the SPAC to guide its election of members and operations. He concluded that the IAI Directorate, in an effort to improve operations and support to Parties, is reviewing if procedures have been established for many of the committees of the CoP and the EC.
27. The Directorate suggested that the SAC and SPAC may wish to consider drafting recommendations for consideration by CoP-26 on how to enhance coordination and collaboration of the two Committees. One suggestion was to invite SPAC members to participate in SAC meetings as appropriate and on an ad hoc basis. Another suggestion would be to reduce the number of members to the SPAC with a view to facilitate joint meetings and discussions. The Directorate presented a possible draft recommendations which are available below:

Directed to the Conference of the Parties

Invites the Conference of the Parties to consider the retirement of Decision XXI/13 on the establishment of the Science-Policy Advisory Committee.

Invites the Conference of the Parties to consider establishing a sub-committee under the Scientific Advisory Committee composed of current members of the Science-Policy Advisory Committee for the provision of advice on the science to policy processes.

Invites the Conference of the Parties to consider the annulment of elections to the Science-Policy Advisory Committee.

Invites the Conference of the Parties to instruct the sub-committee to draft its rules of procedures.

28. Participants agreed on the need to maintain the SPAC, hold joint meetings with the SAC, both virtual and physical, and to draft rules of procedure. They also agreed that rules of procedure are necessary. They concluded by requesting the Chair to present these recommendations for consideration by CoP-26.
29. Following conclusion of discussions on the SAC and the SPAC, the IAI Executive Director informed participants on the need to discuss the IAI Strategic Plan. He noted that the plan had not been extended per Decision XVIII/16 (CoP-18, Asuncion) and that the time was opportune to consider the drafting of a new plan.

30. Given the time remaining in the meeting, participants agreed to raise this topic during the Science-Policy Workshop, which would be held 19 June 2018¹ during EC-45. Three agenda items: enhancement of activities in the Central America and Caribbean region, enhancement of the role of researchers in the policy making process and new areas of possible research on global change with a view to CRN4 were also forwarded for discussion at the Science Policy Workshop.
31. The SAC and SPAC held a closed session on 18 June 2018 to discuss: 1. Amendments to the Rules of procedure for the SAC, and 2. Election of SAC Chair.
32. With regard to item 1 in the closed session, SAC members discussed possible conflicts of interest in the submission of proposals by SAC members to the IAI. Although Resolution 2 adopted at the 7th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Merida, 2000) which referred to the *IAI Policy on Conflict of Interest and Standards of Ethical Conduct* specifically states that

Members of the SAC may participate in proposals to the IAI as investigators, however, they cannot directly contact the IAI in any manner whatsoever regarding the project, whether it is being evaluated, administered, or closed out. An alternate investigator must conduct all negotiations, and the SAC member cannot participate in any discussions or evaluations of the program under which the proposal was submitted,

it is the feeling of the SAC that active members should not be part of proposals. It was decided that a recommendation to amend the Policy should be submitted to the consideration of the Parties at the next CoP.

33. The SAC discussed the election of a new Chair to the SAC since the 2-year term of Dr. Edwin Castellanos, expired at CoP-26. SAC members Dr. Reynaldo Victoria and Dr. Alicia Fernandez Cirelli expressed their desire to act as Chair. In view that Dr. Cirelli's name was to be submitted to the CoP for reelection as SAC member, it was decided to hold the election until the next SAC meeting to wait for a confirmation on whether Dr. Cirelli would be re-elected. The results shall then be presented in the minutes of the next SAC meeting.
34. On return to the joint session of the meeting, the SAC and SPAC Chairs thanked participants for the contributions and invited participants to also attend the Science-Policy Workshop and CoP-26. The meeting closed on 18 June 2018 at 5:00pm.

¹ Report of the 2nd Science-Policy Workshop of the IAI: <http://www.iai.int/wp-content/uploads/iai-cop26-spw-fnrpt-e.pdf>