

**INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR
GLOBAL CHANGE RESEARCH**



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Final Report of the Increasing Country Commitment to the IAI WG *August 8-9 2002, Silver Spring, Maryland, USA*

Participants

Carlos E. Ereño (chair), Lisa Farrow, Eladio Zárate, Emilio Sempre, and Jonathan Pundsack as Rapporteur. On the second day, Paul Filmer joined the group. He was especially invited as observer and link with the Working Group responsible for presenting proposals to the EC.

The group approved the agenda (Appendix 1) presented by the chair.

The chair made an overview of the scope of the meeting, and then a review of the overall activities charged and carried out by the working group. The following issues were reviewed in the presentation:

- 1) Terms of Reference for the WG received at the XIII EC meeting, Panama, July 2001, the proposed methodology and period to carry out the work.
- 2) Information requested from the IAI Directorate as a background for the work of the group.
- 3) ICC WG report presented at the XIV EC meeting, Havana- November 2001.
- 4) The plan of activities proposed to be carried out by the WG from the XIV EC meeting.
- 5) The result of the analyses made by the group members and the report forwarded to EC XV, Sao Jose dos Campos, June 2002.
- 6) The mandate from EC-XV to prepare a full report to the EC and the External Review Committee.
- 7) Update of the information from the IAI Directorate and comments by the IAI Director.

The group also received updated information from the IAI Directorate for the meeting related to the state of Country contributions as of June 30, 2002. This document is included in the report as Appendix 2.

The last documents received are evidence for a considerable decrease in the total debt in contributions to the Core Budget. Some countries that were in arrears in their payments have brought their contributions up to date or paid more than one annual contribution. In face of this major news, the chair of the group suggested to make a special analysis of the following issues:

- 1) Why the state of the voluntary contributions to the IAI core budget has changed?
- 2) Is this situation due to actions of the IAI Directorate or EC board or other?
- 3) Could we expect this tendency will continue?
- 4) Any further actions are needed?
- 5) What about the countries that are still not paying?
- 6) What about the overall participation? Are there indications of a net increase of participation?
- 7) Are the country representatives at our EC/CoP in conditions to influence government commitment to IAI?
- 8) If they not, what can we do?

- 9) What is the role of IAI Director/IAI Staff, EC Board, EC WGs, EC/CoP members?

In order to organize the analysis and the definition of strategies the group took into account the list of subjects that had already been used in previous works and that had been considered representative to evaluate the commitment of IAI member countries. The list was adapted to facilitate the preparation of final recommendations. Every member of the group –including those who did not attend the meeting- prepared a list of comments on each of the issues.

Every analyzed issue was widely discussed and the proposals presented below are the result of the consensus of the members of the group.

1. Status of voluntary contributions

The following was taken into account during the analysis of the state of voluntary contributions:

- 1.1. Countries which have remained paying but less amount than the established payment
- 1.2. Countries that have paid recently but have dues from the past
- 1.3. Countries which didn't pay anything during the last years
- 1.4. Countries that have signed the Agreement but have not ratified
- 1.5. Non-signatory countries in the region

A quantifiable improvement of the state of contributions to the core budget was observed this year. However, the group considered it necessary to keep and increase a sustained effort to have all member countries bringing their contributions up to date. At the same time, in the light of the present state of country commitment to the IAI coercive measures to get the payment of owed contributions should be avoided.

Some countries do not perceive the benefits of being part of the IAI. In some cases, national authorities responsible before the IAI do not have an updated state of scientific and training achievements produced by the participation of people from their countries in IAI supported activities.

The suggested recommendations are:

Recommendation 1.1: *The IAI Director, together with the EC Board should make the greatest effort to have countries fulfill their commitments to support the core budget. Strategies to achieve this should be planned on a case-by-case basis. In addition to the traditional ways, i.e. the IAI country representatives, steps will be taken through the diplomatic way at the Embassies of the countries in Brazil or the corresponding Ministry of Foreign Affairs.*

Recommendation 1.2: *When negotiating with the authorities of a given country it is advisable to provide them with detailed information on the benefits the country has received from IAI, as well as the progress made by the scientific groups that have taken part in IAI supported activities.*

Recommendation 1.3: *Make appropriate payment arrangements with debtor countries in order to facilitate their bringing up to date of contributions.*

Recommendation 1.4: *For the moment, measures that would disqualify debtor countries from taking part in IAI institutional and/or programmatic activities should be avoided.*

Recommendation 1.5: *Restart efforts to incorporate American countries that are not part of the IAI.*

2. Other contributions apart from voluntary contributions

The following issues were considered to analyze the contributions made by the countries, apart from the payments to the core budget:

2.1. Programmatic funds

2.2. Other contributions

Contributions of member countries to IAI programs and/or activities that are not included in the core budget have been uneven, only a few countries having contributed. No contributions have been received from other sources than member countries. The existence of a series of national organizations that support scientific research was observed. Although they provide important contributions to research of global change related issues, most of them only support national programs.

Recommendation 2.1: *The IAI Director, together with the EC Board, will evaluate funding opportunities beyond the IAI member nations, in order to find support for the programmatic activities of the Institute, e.g. foundations, international organizations, etc.*

3. Agreements or MOUs signed with the IAI

The effectiveness of existing MOUs and agreements and the need of fostering such mechanisms were analyzed. MOUs and agreements, with few exceptions, have been found to be ineffective.

Recommendation 3.1: *The IAI Director will make greatest efforts to reactivate the signed MOUs, trying to translate the written cooperation into effective activities.*

Recommendation 3.2: *The signing of new MOUs and/or Agreements between the IAI and state or private organizations with shared interests with the IAI should be fostered. Priority should be given to purposeful agreements with specific objectives.*

4. Participation of representative individuals in IAI institutional activities

Under this bullet, the group analyzed the relation between the country commitment and the individuals or institutions that represent the country before the IAI. Some representatives have been observed to get their countries actively participating in IAI activities. Others instead have not been so successful. It is also recognized that IAI cannot influence the election of the organization or individual(s) that will represent the country.

However, a description of the advisable conditions to be fulfilled by institutions or individuals that are to represent a country before the IAI should be prepared.

Recommendation 4.1: *The Executive Council should elaborate a description of the advisable conditions for institutions or individuals that would represent a country before the IAI. Such description would only be a reference that countries may take into account or not. If the EC considers it appropriate to prepare this description, the group suggests that the eventual IAI country representative should be able to influence the government's decisions as regards global change research related issues. The nomination of an alternative representative is also advisable. In this case, it should be someone who is deeply interested in IAI activities, part of an organization related to IAI. The establishment of National Committees or Commissions might also be encouraged, in a way that they would include most of the organizations that are interested in the IAI.*

5. Country sponsored IAI institutional, scientific or educational meetings

Organization of institutional, scientific, or educational meetings has been observed to contribute to strengthening links between the host country and the IAI. On the other hand, participation of member countries in institutional meetings –Conference of the Parties in particular- was analyzed. Some countries seem to have financial problems to afford the participation of their representatives.

Recommendation 5.1: *Promote the organization of IAI meetings –especially EC and SAC meetings- in countries that are not part of the Executive Council.*

Recommendation 5.2: *The Executive Council should find a mechanism that would reduce the frequency of IAI institutional meetings. The group anticipates that fewer meetings might reduce the financial burden on IAI member countries, as well as give an air of additional importance to individual meetings. Each meeting could be focused on a specific high priority issue in addition to the conduct of usual business, in order to attract the interest of high level individuals. The suggestion is to consider the possibility of holding an annual Executive Council meeting and a meeting of the Conference of the Parties every two years. These meetings should be held separately.*

6. Participation in scientific and educational activities supported by IAI

The group analyzed a series of suggestions on scientific and/or educational IAI activities. In some countries, information on IAI activities does not reach all the potentially interested institutions. In some places, the opinion is that participation in IAI activities is not fully open. On the other hand, the lack of enough resources to support some visibly excellent research projects has given rise to a feeling of unease among many excellent scientists and a consequent rift between them and the IAI. Moreover, it has been observed that the IAI has to act in parallel with other funding organizations, which in many cases offer grants that are more important and attractive as regards amount of funding.

Recommendation 6.1: *Update the IAI list server, in order to expand the database of people interested in the IAI.*

Recommendation 6.2: *Identify -at a country level- all the institutions that might be interested in IAI activities.*

Recommendation 6.3: *Take special care of communication with PIs that have not been selected in the new opportunity announcements. The information on the evaluation process should be wide and clear enough to prevent from doubts about the reasons for not supporting a given project.*

Recommendation 6.4: *Prepare a special infosheet explaining clearly and in detail the IAI evaluation process of scientific projects. Widely disseminate this information and include it in the web site of the Institute.*

Recommendation 6.5: *Review the information that is published as Financial Statement in the IAI Annual Report, and try to make it more explanatory as regards the allocation of funds by IAI, e.g. what proportion of IAI funding goes toward research.*

Recommendation 6.6: *Promote applied courses that would consider regional needs for students and decision makers. This recommendation seeks to promote participation of policy-makers and decision makers in IAI activities.*

Recommendation 6.7: *Study, with the help of the SAC, new mechanisms to recruit key researchers in the region and help them in order to build capacity in institutions and groups that are less developed from the scientific perspective. The suggestion is to support these key researchers by providing them with funding for trips and assistantships, training and data.*

7. Diffusion of IAI activities in the countries

When discussing this point the group detected many examples of lack of visibility of IAI. Visits of the IAI Director and/or EC Chair have been recognized effective to a degree but this effectiveness was not sustained in time, especially because of the changes of the national authorities that are connected to IAI.

Recommendation 7.1: *We recommend the IAI Director, together with the EC Board, to study how to take decisive steps to increase the visibility of IAI.*

Recommendation 7.2: *Actively promote the visits of the IAI Director to member countries, giving priority to countries with less participation in activities of the Institute. Greatest advantage should be taken from each visit to show the IAI to interested authorities and institutions, considering Recommendation 1.2.*

8. Other issues

After ten years from the establishment of IAI the governments that were summoned to discuss the creation of an Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research should be given the opportunity of evaluating the work done and expressing their opinion on the future of the Institute. The conclusions of the External Review Committee may be the appropriate element to evaluate the Institute and reformulate its goals for the next years.

General Recommendation: *Convene a high level meeting similar to that that brought the Institute into being, in order to:*

- a) *Present the results of 10 years of existence of IAI*
- b) *Disseminate the report of the External Review Committee*

- c) *To craft the vision of the next decade in collaboration of global change research for the Americas and the role of the IAI in facilitating this vision.*

Appendix 1 – Meeting of the Increasing Country Commitment to the IAI WG

August 8-9, 2002 Silver Spring, Maryland, USA

AGENDA

Preliminary Agenda Items:

Based on the recommendations made by the Executive Council / Conference of the Parties at their last meetings (June 25-28, 2002, Sao Jose dos Campos, Brazil), after the presentation of the IAI (ICC) Working Group report it was decided that the WG will meet to make a final Report the EC and the IAI External Review Committee.

The agenda items have to review all the information the group have received or analyzed so far, particularly last year information and make a final analysis and recommendations on the ways to improve the country commitment to IAI.

Thursday August 8, 2002, 9:00 am – 6:00 pm

1. Reading and approval of the agenda for this meeting
2. Revision of the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the WG.
3. Report of the ICC WG to the EC–XIV meeting (November, 2001)
4. Proposed ICC WG Work Schedule (December, 2001).
5. Report of the ICC WG to the EC – XV meeting (June, 2002)
6. Presentation of the results obtained by each of the members of the group.

Friday August 9, 2002, 9:00 am – 12:00 noon

7. Identification of common problems emerging from the information provided by the members of the group.
8. Identification of possible strategies to increase country participation.
9. WG final report and further activities

Appendix 2 - Core Budget - 2001 / 2002

Country Contributions as of June 30, 2002

	Outstanding Contribution		Payments	Due as of	Contribution	Paid	Due as of	Contribution	Paid	Due as of
	30-Jun-98	FY 99/00	FY 99/00	30-Jun-00	for FY 00/01	Jul/00-Jun/01	30-Jun-01	for FY 01/02	Jul/01 - Jun/02	30-Jun-02
Argentina	30.000,00	35.000,00	(20.000,00)	45.000,00	45.000,00	(20.000,00)	70.000,00	45.000,00	(34.975,00)	80.025,00
Brazil (*)	0,08	70.000,00	(48.077,00)	21.923,08	80.000,00	(137.444,08)	(35.521,00)	80.000,00	(66.214,88)	-21.735,88
Canada	2.425,78	100.000,00	(51.213,00)	51.212,78	115.000,00	(111.250,00)	54.962,78	115.000,00	(169.962,78)	0,00
Chile	5.000,00	5.000,00		10.000,00	5.000,00		15.000,00	5.000,00		20.000,00
Colombia		5.000,00	(5.000,00)	-	10.000,00		10.000,00	10.000,00		20.000,00
Costa Rica	10.000,00	5.000,00		15.000,00	5.000,00		20.000,00	5.000,00	(17.900,54)	7.099,46
Cuba	-	5.000,00	-	5.000,00	5.000,00	(9.933,44)	66,56	5.000,00		5.066,56
Dom.Republic	10.000,00	5.000,00		15.000,00	5.000,00		20.000,00	5.000,00		25.000,00
Ecuador	10.000,00	5.000,00		15.000,00	5.000,00		20.000,00	5.000,00	(5.000,00)	20.000,00
Guatemala	10.000,00	5.000,00		15.000,00	5.000,00		20.000,00	5.000,00		25.000,00
Jamaica		5.000,00		5.000,00	5.000,00	(5.000,00)	5.000,00	5.000,00	(5.000,00)	5.000,00
Mexico	31.103,92	45.000,00	(19.999,99)	56.103,93	55.000,00	(24.321,00)	86.782,93	55.000,00	(144.778,43)	-2.995,50
Panama		5.000,00	(5.000,00)	-	5.000,00	(5.000,00)	-	5.000,00		5.000,00
Paraguay	15.000,00	5.000,00		20.000,00	5.000,00		25.000,00	5.000,00		30.000,00
Peru	17.000,00	5.000,00		22.000,00	5.000,00		27.000,00	5.000,00	(12.000,00)	20.000,00
Uruguay	5.000,00	5.000,00		10.000,00	5.000,00		15.000,00	5.000,00		20.000,00
USA (**)		485.000,00	(485.000,00)	-	550.000,00	(187.283,00)	362.717,00	550.000,00	(912.717,00)	0,00
Venezuela	29.715,73	25.000,00	(20.386,39)	34.329,34	30.000,00	(2.500,00)	61.829,34	30.000,00		91.829,34
	175.245,51	820.000,00	(654.676,38)	340.569,13	940.000,00	(502.731,52)	777.837,61	940.000,00	(1.368.548,63)	349.288,98

Notes: (*) Brazil had already advanced contributions for FY 2002/2003

(**) USA's contribution to IAI core budget is made through a grant from NSF. Funds are received by IAI according to an agreed schedule of payments