

**Terms of Reference
for the
Science-Policy Advisory Committee
of the
Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research**

Rationale

At the twenty-first Conference of the Parties (June 2013) IAI members decided the establishment of an Advisory Committee on Science-Policy Liaison. The committee will provide advice to the CoP and the IAI Directorates on ways to effectively strengthen the relevance of the Institute's science programs for policy development and decision making. This decision follows prior decisions to create the Science-Policy Liaison Directorate as part of the tripartite governance structure of the IAI, approved by the Twentieth Conference of the Parties of the IAI.

The Science-Policy Advisory Committee (SPAC) will assist in developing the IAI's strategy to improve and broaden the links between its scientific work and policy-making communities, and thereby provide support and guidance to the Directorate.

The SPAC will advise the IAI on how to (1) effectively link its science and research to decision making; (2) build institutional capacity for a dialogue between scientific research and decision-making; and (3) effectively engage policy stakeholders in the Institute's programs and other activities.

The SPAC should complement and not duplicate CoP and SAC discussions, working with these bodies as appropriate.

Composition, duration and functioning

The SPAC shall be composed of nine (9) members invited by the CoP from a list of candidates established as outlined below. Members will serve in their personal capacity and not represent their institutions or countries. In addition, the SPAC will include the Chairs of the Executive Council and Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and the IAI Director of the Science-Policy Liaison Office as ex-officio members.

SPAC members shall serve for three (3) years, and shall be eligible for a second term on an exceptional basis. If possible, terms shall be managed in such a way that no more than three (3) members are replaced in any one year.

Members are expected to be internationally recognized experts and/or practitioners in science-based decision making or science-policy liaison in areas relevant to the IAI. The composition of the SPAC should be balanced by geography, gender, themes and societal sectors, including members of different levels of government, the private sector and the civil society. It may, exceptionally, include members from outside the Americas.

The Conference of the Parties shall select SPAC members through a consultative process and make every effort to do so by consensus. Three (3) members each shall be selected from nominations received from the Parties, from the SPAC itself; and from the Directorate.

The SPAC shall meet as necessary and possible according to budget, but at least once a year. The SPAC shall decide if meetings are to be held back to back with SAC and CoP meetings or separately.

The SPAC shall choose a Chair and Vice-Chair from among its members. The Chair will report regularly, on behalf of the SPAC, to the CoP. The Directorate of Science-Policy Liaison shall act as Secretariat for the SPAC.

Mandate

The SPAC shall:

- a) Provide advice to the IAI Directorate and the Conference of the Parties regarding the policy relevance of IAI's work, and planning. In its consideration of policy relevance, the SPAC should explore channels of communication between science and policy, and assist science and capacity building projects to address issues facing decision-makers.
- b) Help define themes around which the IAI can develop science and policy programs and funding strategies.
- c) Serve as a consultative forum for IAI's science-policy liaison strategy, and advise on establishing two-way dialogue between policy/decision-makers and the science community to ensure the policy relevance of IAI's work, where appropriate.
- d) Engage with the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) to strengthen the policy relevance of IAI's scientific work. The chairs or vice chairs of the SPAC and SAC should participate in meetings of both committees and act as liaison.
- e) Organize, with the Directorate, policy fora around particular issues. In doing so, SPAC members shall not advocate any specific policy decisions or engage in lobbying.
- f) Assess the policy relevance of the Institute's scientific results and emerging science programs and provide advice to the Directorate, SAC and CoP on how to strengthen the link between science and decision-making.
- g) Advise the CoP and the Directorate on fundraising for SPAC-related activities.
- h) Assist in developing strategic alliances with other institutions engaged in science-policy dialogue.
- i) Develop and adopt its rules of procedure and normally operate by consensus.
- j) Perform any other functions entrusted to it by the Conference of the Parties.