



**DATA-SHEET**  
**2020**  
**IAI - United States of America**

The United States Government ratified the Agreement Establishing the IAI in 1993 and is represented by the National Science Foundation (NSF).

**1. ONGOING RESEARCH PROGRAM**

**Co-funded Small Grants Program: The role of ecosystem services in adaptation to global change for human wellbeing (SGP-HW)**

The program focuses on research questions that are relevant to policy makers or other stakeholders, have strong scientific interest, and address concerns for human wellbeing and livelihoods. Projects are expected to support decision-making and adaptation action in a transdisciplinary approach that promotes using, conserving, restoring, and managing ecosystems so that the natural capital is preserved, while providing important services.

6 projects, 9 countries, investigating the following topics:

- Fires / air quality
- Small-scale fishing and marine ecosystem services
- Water governance
- Floodplain governance in over-built river basins
- Local and traditional knowledge for biodiversity conservation
- Resilience and adaptability to global change

IAI Parties and the region can benefit from the projects results and products.

[More information on the projects and their progress](#)

## 2. STeP PROGRAM

The Science, Technology, Policy (STeP) Fellowship Program is an innovative landmark program of the IAI to enhance human and institutional capacities in IAI member countries and to support the provision of expert scientific advice to policy makers for the development of public policy relevant to global change.

Scientist Fellows in the STeP program are placed at host government or private organizations to engage first-hand with policy and decision-makers and facilitate the uptake of scientific knowledge into decision making processes.

The STeP program is training future Latin American and Caribbean leaders to participate in the science-policy interface through hands-on learning supported by professional development and mentorship.

STeP Fellows will participate in the IAI Inter-American network of STeP peers and alumni and share best practices and lessons learned. This multinational network creates the means to integrate diverse knowledge and expertise across different sectors and countries in response to critical global change challenges in the Americas. The network allows for sharing resources, disseminating employment and other professional opportunities, and contributing to career development and work collaboration at the completion of the fellowship.

STeP is a new initiative of the IAI Capacity Building Program in collaboration with the work of the IAI on Science Policy. Please contact Ms. Ohira ([marcella@dir.iai.int](mailto:marcella@dir.iai.int)) or Ms. Ehlers ([sehlers@dir.iai.int](mailto:sehlers@dir.iai.int)) for additional information including questions on participation. Information is also available on the STeP webpage: <http://www.iai.int/en/step>

## 3. CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM – Recent activities (2018 – present)

**Postgraduate course and a cutting-edge international seminar: [Integrating Global Change knowledge to decision-making processes in La Plata Basin: a transdisciplinary approach](#), 8 - 14 September 2019, Santa Fe, Argentina**

The seminar was funded by the IAI with resources from the National Science Foundation (NSF) of the United States. Other collaborators are the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Americas and the UNESCO Chair Water and Education for Sustainable Development. Experts from the USA participated as speakers and in the organizing committee.

It aimed to create a space for reflection and dialogue about the interface between science and politics, analyzing the current situation and proposing ideas that promote the strengthening of the links between actors and their integration, contributing to the design of public policy that, in a context of Global Change, aim at sustainable development.

The forum was intended for a broad and diverse audience from academia, government and civil society. Researchers with different formations and scientific interest were available, decision-makers in areas whose themes are linked in one way or another to the problems posed by global change, as well as civil society actors interested in their connotations and impacts.

38 applicants from IAI States Parties were selected to participate. Participants perform various roles in the decision making and research communities: 1. University institutions (graduate students, young professors and researchers) and the scientific-technological sector; 2. State agencies at their various levels (regional, national, provincial and municipal); 3. Organizations and companies in the productive sector (associations, cooperatives, etc.); 4. Civil society (non-governmental organizations); 5. Independent professional field.

The course also included the Science-Policy Forum "Building the dialogue between Science and Politics within the framework of Global Change"(September 12th, 2019), whose objective was to specify a space for

reflection and dialogue about the interface between science and policy, analyzing the current situation and proposing ideas which promote a strengthening of the links between the actors and their integration, contributing to the design of public policies that, in a context of Global Change, aim at sustainable development. The forum was intended for a wide and diverse public from academia, the governmental sector and civil society.

#### **São Paulo School of Advanced Science on Scenarios and Modeling on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services to Support Human Well-Being, 1 to 14 July 2019, São Pedro, Brazil**

Given the complexity of current changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services (BES), the use of scenarios and modelling became not only a top research priority, but also an indispensable tool for decision making. The São Paulo School of Advanced Science on Scenarios and Modelling on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services to Support Human Well-Being gathered a critical mass of young scientists to discuss scientific knowledge of relevance to society.

More than 100 graduate students from several countries, including USA, participated in this activity. The funded students spent two weeks in Sao Paulo, Brazil participating in theoretical talks, poster sessions, fieldwork, among other scientific and training activities.

#### **Science Diplomacy Workshop, 17 to 19 October 2018, Panama City, Panama**

The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI) and the National Secretariat of Science, Technology and Innovation (SENACYT), Panamá, have organized the Workshop on Science Diplomacy held in Panama City on 17 to 19 October 2018. The course took place in the week prior to the Latin America and the Caribbean Open Science Forum (CILAC 2018), in order to promote an exchange of knowledge and experiences among scientific researchers, managers and other experts and leaders from Panama and the Latin American Region, on various themes associated with global changes (health, energy, climate change, water, etc.).

More than 40 scientist, politicians, and decision makers from 9 countries, including USA, came together for three days in a collaborative learning environment to learn about science diplomacy and its application in the region.

Participants shared past experiences with science diplomacy (both successes and challenges) and exchanged ideas with each other to build regional, collaborative science diplomacy networks.

#### **São Paulo School of Advanced Science on Ocean Interdisciplinary Research and Governance, 13 to 25 August 2018, São Paulo, Brazil**

The School was intended to contribute to the training of graduate students in the area of ocean sciences. The secondary objectives were to promote the exchange of knowledge between disciplines and experiences; encourage cultural exchange between participants, instructors and organizers and facilitate the development of collaborative networks. Experts from the USA participated as speakers.

The School brought together a critical mass of young scientists from several countries, including USA, interested in interdisciplinary research and ocean governance to discuss scientific knowledge of importance to society.

It consisted of a 12-day course, sessions of posters and tutoring and a field trip to the Baixada Santista, a metropolitan coastal region of nine cities in the state of Sao Paulo.

## **4. PARTICIPATION IN THE IAI BODIES**

### **Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC)**

The Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) is composed of ten members elected by the CoP. These members are scientists recognized internationally for their expertise in a variety of disciplines relevant to global change research. As the main scientific advisory body of the IAI, it makes recommendations to the Conference of the Parties regarding the Science Agenda, long-range plans and annual program of the Institute. The SAC also leads the peer-review system for scientific proposals and results of IAI funded programs.

There is one member from USA in the SAC:

Joshua Tewksbury, University of Washington  
Area of expertise: Biology, ecology  
Appointments: 2016-2019, 2019-2022

#### **Science-Policy Advisory Committee (SPAC)**

The SPAC was established by the CoP in 2013 to provide advice to the CoP and the IAI Directorate regarding the application and design of science in policy and decision making.

There is one member from USA in the SPAC:

Vaughan Turekian, U.S. National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine  
Executive Director, Policy and Global Affairs Division  
Appointment: 2020-2023

#### **Executive Council (EC)**

The Executive Council develops policy recommendations for submission to and approval by the Conference of the Parties, and ensures that policies adopted by the Conference of the Parties are implemented by the Directorate.

USA is part of the current composition of the EC, 2020-2022: Canada, Chile, Jamaica, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, **United States of America**, and Uruguay. The Chair of the Executive Council for this period is Dr. Maria Uhle (United States of America).

## **5. COLLABORATION WITH NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

On 14 September 2018 the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research and the AAAS signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Washington, D.C., United States. The MoU outlines activities and issues to be jointly addressed by the IAI and the AAAS, particularly activities related to science-diplomacy.

The AAAS and the IAI have had a longstanding and fruitful relationship. Becoming an Associate of the IAI offers the AAAS better channels to provide advice on science and science diplomacy more directly to Parties and to more actively participate in activities developed by the IAI. It also offers the IAI opportunities to contribute to the AAAS's outstanding science-diplomacy activities and initiatives developed through its Center for Science Diplomacy, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The IAI Directorate participated in the AAAS fourth annual science diplomacy conference on a panel that addressed "Strengthening Ties, Strengthening Global Policy Making: Mechanisms in the Americas" along with distinguished speakers, such as Mona Nemer, Chief Science Advisor, Government of Canada, Aisha Jones, Executive Director, Biotech R&D Institute of Jamaica, and Rita Colwell, Distinguished University Professor, University of Maryland at College Park and at Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health, former AAAS president and former director of the US National Science Foundation. The Directorate presented and highlighted the work of the IAI in science diplomacy in the Americas.